

Group claims killing Egyptian general

CAIRO (AFP) — A militant underground group, Al Jama'a al Islamiyah, claimed responsibility Saturday for killing a police general, a police officer and a passerby in two attacks last week. In a statement obtained by AFP, the group said the murder Wednesday of General Mahmoud Al Dib, chief police investigator in southern Qena province, and Tuesday's killing of Lieutenant-Colonel Abu Bakr Salem in nearby Abu Tig were the work of its "armed forces." Gen. Dib's killers wounded two policemen accompanying him, along with three passersby, one of whom later died of his wounds. The murders were carried out as Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak "pretended in America and France that security reigns in Egypt and the extremists have been wiped out," the group's statement said. "Security will never reign in Egypt until Islamic law enters the statute books and Mubarak's junta persists" in governing, it added. Mr. Mubarak returned here Saturday from an eight-day tour of the United States and France, with a last-minute stopover in Syria. An Egyptian military court on Saturday condemned to death eight members of another underground Islamic group, and handed down long prison terms for a plot to overthrow the government (see page 10).

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جورديان تايمز يومية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»

Russia demands loan for Libyan vote

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Russia is demanding an interest-free loan from the West as a condition for supporting new sanctions against Libya for sheltering two suspects in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, a victim's relative says. Susan Cohen, whose daughter was among the 270 people killed in the 1988 bombing, said she learned from government sources that Moscow was seeking the loan. The loan would compensate Russia for \$4 billion it would lose from the tightened sanctions. Moscow says Libya owes it that amount for past military and commercial trade. Russia has threatened to veto the new sanctions unless its debt with Libya is addressed. The United States, Britain and France are anxious for the Security Council to slap new sanctions on Libya for refusing to turn over the suspects in the Flight 103 case. The new sanctions would freeze Libya's assets abroad but exclude its source of biggest foreign currency earnings, future sales of oil and petroleum products. Some Libyan oil equipment purchases would be banned. Current sanctions bar the sale of arms, as well as air links and diplomatic embargo from Libya. They were approved in April 1992.

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Hadid replaces Hamami; envoys named

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers Saturday decided to appoint Khaled Madadha as Jordan's ambassador to Belgium, Trad Al Fayez as ambassador to Qatar and Amjad Majali as ambassador to Greece. The Cabinet decided to retire Ambassador Nasser Al Bataineh as of Dec. 1, 1993. The Cabinet, which met under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, also appointed Nayef Al Hadid as secretary-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He will be replacing Hussein Hamami, who has been named ambassador of Jordan to Morocco.

Arabs, Jews protest Jerusalem plan

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and an Israeli peace group demonstrated in Ras Al Amud in Arush West Jerusalem on Saturday against plans by the Jerusalem Municipality to establish a new Jewish neighbourhood there. Several hundred protesters also called for Jerusalem to be declared the joint capital of both Israelis and Palestinians. "I hope that we will see more people who are really convinced about the peace and about two capitals in one city," Palestinian leader Faisal Al Hussein told reporters. The Israeli group Gush Shalom (Peace Bloc) urged Jerusalem's Israeli mayor, Teddy Kolek, to come out against the plan for the new neighbourhood approved by the municipality. Mr. Kolek is standing for reelection on Tuesday after 28 years in office. His main opponent is former Health Minister Ehud Olmert.

Israel to submit list of prisoners

NICOSIA (AFP) — Israel will hand over to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Monday a "substantial" list of Palestinian prisoners it plans to release, Israeli Ambassador to France Yehouda Lancry said in a radio interview Saturday. Speaking on Radio Monte Carlo, Mr. Lancry said Israeli negotiators would hand over a list of prisoners to be freed which was "very substantial in terms of quantity" to their Palestinian counterparts in autonomy talks in Taba, Egypt. "I am not able to give precise numbers," he told the radio station. Some 617 prisoners were released last week. Palestinian negotiators say all 11,000 Palestinian detainees should be freed under the terms of the Sept. 13 autonomy accord with Israel.

Hamas claim of killing settler sparks Israeli riot

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The fundamentalist Hamas movement claimed responsibility Saturday for the killing of a Jewish settler in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

The claim triggered an explosion of rage by thousands of Jewish settlers who smashed and stoned Arab cars, burned tyres and blocked most highways in West Bank.

"We kidnapped the settler Chaim and stabbed him and burned his body and took his personal weapon which is an Uzi machine gun," a Hamas spokesman said in a telephone call to the Middle East Broadcasting Corporation (MEBC). Security sources said earlier the army had found the body of Chaim Mizrahi, a Jewish settler abducted by masked men near the West Bank town of Ramallah on Friday. The army said it was still checking the identity of the scorched body.

Hamas opposes the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord on Palestinian self-rule signed in Washington last month.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal said Israel would not let fundamentalist groups derail its peace talks with the PLO. "There should be no illusions about our resolve to use the full extent of the law and all our force against those who perpetrate attacks," Mr. Shahal told Israeli armed forces radio.

Palestinian leader Faisal Hussein said he was "sad"

about the killing.

"We are so sad about any killing, Palestinian or Israeli, and we hope that these activities will stop," Mr. Hussein told reporters in Jerusalem.

The fresh flareup of extremist violence came at a time when Israel and the PLO reported some progress in their talks on autonomy in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

Israeli reports have said that in the fourth round of talks, to begin Monday in the Egyptian resort of Taba, Israel would submit timetables for troop withdrawal and the release of thousands of Palestinian prisoners. Under the Israel-PLO accord, the army pullout from Gaza and Jericho is to begin Dec. 13 and be completed by April 13.

Thousands of Jewish settlers took to the streets Saturday evening.

Settlers blocked most intersections in the West Bank and burned tyres, said Shai Bazak, a settler spokesman.

About 200 settlers from Mizrahi's settlement of Beit El rampaged through the nearby Palestinian town of Al Birah. Swinging clubs, they smashed dozens of car windows, Arab reporters said. Several of the damaged cars belonged to guests attending a wedding in a nearby park.

North of Jerusalem, women settlers erected makeshift roadblocks with stones and bricks.

Outside of Prime Minister

Yitzhak Rabin's home about 150 settlers chanted "Rabin is a traitor."

Also Saturday, a Palestinian involved in large-scale land sales to Jewish settlements was killed in the West Bank town of Kalkilya while buying decorations for his daughter's wedding.

Israeli radio said two assailants burst into the gift shop, stabbed Ahmad Odeh in the head. The army said Arar, 50, was dead on arrival at Meir hospital in the nearby Israeli town of Kfar Sava.

Arar was one of the biggest land dealers in the West Bank, and was about to close a sale of private Arab lands for the enlargement of Jewish settlements in the area, the radio said.

In other developments Saturday:

— In Gaza's Rafah refugee camp, some 3,000 Palestinian women marched to demand the immediate release of the about 9,500 Palestinians jailed by Israel. Some 600 were freed last week, but Israel conditioned further releases on progress in Taba.

— In Gaza City's Shifa hospital, a Palestinian doctor was abducted at gunpoint by two masked men, Arab reporters said. The physician, Dr. Mohammad Abu Enneim, is affiliated with the PLO's mainstream Fatah faction, but it was not clear whether the abduction was politically motivated.

King visits family of killed officer, wounded soldiers



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday visits the family of Hussein Mohammad Ali, an army officer who was killed in a shootout Friday.

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday visited the family of an army officer killed in a shootout with three gunmen at a military checkpoint near Karamah in the Jordan Valley on the ceasefire line with Israel, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The agency said the King, who was accompanied by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, His Royal Highness Prince Ali and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Lieutenant-General Abdul Hafez Miral, condoled the family of Hussein Mohammad Ali.

The family of the officer, who was buried with full military honours at his hometown of Deir Abi Saeed in the Irbid Governorate, expressed deep appreciation of the King's gesture of sympathy and reiterated their allegiance to the Hashemite throne, Petra said.

The King also visited the five soldiers wounded in Friday's confrontation being treated at the King Hussein Medical Centre and wished them speedy recovery, the agency said.

The French news agency, AFP, meanwhile quoted an unidentified official as saying that the attack was the work of an Islamic militant group. An army statement issued Friday said the three gunmen were spotted near the military point and they ignored orders to identify themselves and opened fire first.

The assailants were identified by the official quoted by AFP as one Jordanian and

two Arabs. But "the motives of the attack on Friday were unclear, the official said, declining to identify their group," the agency said.

"The aim was probably not to infiltrate Israel because they would have avoided attacking the Jordanian army post," the official was quoted as saying by AFP.

"The official said the attack could have been in protest at Jordan's signing on Sept. 14 in Washington of an agenda for further peace negotiations with Israel," AFP said.

Also on Saturday, the King visited several units of the Armed Forces.

Petra said the King's first stop was at the Fourth Royal Mechanised Division, where he addressed the unit and expressed pride in the Armed Forces' efforts and defence of the Arab Homeland.

It quoted the King as saying that he was happy to be among "the people who

shield the nation and homeland."

The King also visited a unit of the air force.

Jordan Television showed the King addressing officers and soldiers, expressing hope that the Parliament expected to be elected on Nov. 8 would "include the best of representatives who will be able to reflect the people's aspirations and hopes."

The King also said he hoped that all parties concerned would ensure that the elections would be fair and honest.

"... I don't frankly appreciate the fact that we have 20 parties plus one," he said. "I believe this is a stage in our life that we have to pass through, and may be the next elections or those after that, would give better results."

The King expressed hope that all Jordanians would "fulfill their duties and take active part in the elections."

Mubarak meets Assad, predicts progress this year

Combined agency dispatches

CAIRO — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said Saturday he expected progress in Syrian-Israeli peace talks in the next two months, according to the official Egyptian Middle East News Agency (MENA).

Mr. Mubarak said he expected progress "in a month, or by the year's end at the latest," MENA reported.

He was speaking after meeting with President Hafez Al Assad in Syria in a bid to revive stalled peace talks between Syria and Israel.

Mr. Mubarak flew back to Egypt after his three-hour stopover in the Mediterranean town of Latakia, which came at the end of week-long trip to the United States and France.

Mr. Assad and Mr. Mubarak discussed the latest developments in the Middle East peace process and meetings Mr. Mubarak held with President Bill Clinton and President Francois Mitterrand during his trip, Syrian officials said.

Mr. Assad said after the meeting that he would not budge from his principle of "land for peace" with Israel, demanding the return of all Arab territories seized by the Jewish state.

Peace talks between Israel and Syria are bogged down over the issue of the Golan Heights.

Working group on water adopts Jordanian canal project

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The working group disussing water-sharing as part of the multi-lateral phase of the Middle East peace process has endorsed a Jordanian plan to build a multi-purpose canal linking the Red Sea with the Dead Sea.

The decision, which turned down an Israeli proposal to link the Mediterranean with the Dead Sea, was announced at a meeting of the working group on water in Peking.

The World Bank has expressed willingness to consid-

er financing a feasibility study of the project.

The working group on water will meet next in Canada in April.

According to Munther Haddadin, who headed the Jordanian delegation to the talks, the endorsed project entails building 280 kilometres of open canals and pipelines from Jordan's Red Sea coast at Aqaba.

The project, estimated to cost \$1.5 billion, will help raise the receding level of the Dead Sea so that the environmental features of the area could be protected and the historical level of the Dead Sea could be maintained, Dr.

Haddadin has said.

He said the Dead Sea had fallen from its historic level as a result of the diminishing volume of water from the River Jordan, evaporation and industrial use by mineral extracting plants on the Jordanian and Israeli shores.

The declining level, he explained, leads to seepages from the aquifers in the area.

"It is important to keep the Dead Sea at its historic levels," he said. "The importance of that is environmental," but (also) the preservation of aquifers on our sides.

The additional advantages of the project, which will

benefit all the three riparians of the Dead Sea — Jordan, Israel and the Palestinians — include possibilities of desalination of the Red Sea water, development of the arid, mostly desert region in the south as well as hydro-electric power generation.

The Israeli project to link the Mediterranean Sea with the Dead Sea was estimated to cost \$3 billion. It was shelved six years ago because of the high cost.

However, the Sept. 13 agreement signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) includes a clear reference to the project.

Tribal split favours parties in Amman's Fifth District

This is the first in a series of articles on candidates, their campaigns, strategies and chances for the Nov. 8 elections in individual constituencies:

By Amman Al Safadi Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The adverse impact that the change in the Election Law is expected to have on the performance of large well-organised political groups in the coming parliamentary elections will be offset in constituencies where dominant tribes fail to put their weight behind one family candidate.

The introduction of the one-person, one-vote formula into the electoral process has been expected to work to the disadvantage of political parties, favouring tribal candidates if they managed to have the undivided support of their clans.

Many tribes, however, have failed to agree on one candidate, strengthening the chances of political parties which are also trying to minimise the impact of the new law on their performance by fielding candidates who enjoy strong tribal support.

In Karak, for instance, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) has fielded two candidates from the prominent Majali

tribe in order to split the tribal vote and better the chances of its other candidates.

In Zarqa, one of the candidates comes from the large Bani Hassan tribe, whose various clans have not agreed on a single candidate. A clearer example of where tribal divisions are most likely to play into the hands of political parties, mainly the IAF, is Amman's Fifth District, where 42 candidates are competing for the constituency's four Muslim and one Circassian parliamentary seats.

The IAF is fielding four candidates in this district, geographically the largest district in Amman, which includes Jubeiha, Abu Nuseir, Shafa Badran, Sweileh, Tla' Al Ali, Khaledeh, Umm Al Summaq, Wadi Seer, Marj Al Hammam, Naour and Um Al Basateen, in an attempt to repeat its electoral gains of 1989 when Islamic hardliners Hammam Said, Mohammad Abu Fares and Daoud Kojak won the elections on the ticket of the Muslim Brotherhood. The other two seats

went to Ahmad Al Abbadi, an independent with Islamist and east Jordanian nationalist leanings from the large Ahmadi tribe, and Ata Shahwan, also an independent, from the Ajarmeh tribe.

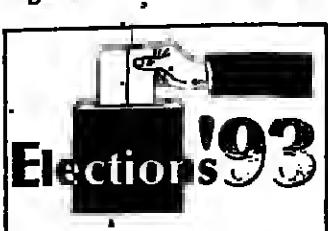
Observers believe the IAF will manage to fare well in this district, mainly due to two reasons. The first is that the district has traditionally been one of the Islamists' strongholds. The second is that the tribal vote will be split among nine candidates from the Ahmadi tribe, seven candidates from the Ajarmeh tribes, two candidates from the Adwan tribe, some of whose members are running in the Balqa District and three candidates from the Asaf clan.

The outly tribe in the district which is unanimous in supporting one candidate is the Lawzi tribe in the Jubeiha area.

The tribe's candidate Miflah Al Lawzi lost his bid for election in 1989 with narrow margin. Observers say Mr. Lawzi has good relations with residents of Jubeiha and has a good chance of winning the majority of its 9,000 registered voters, especially that

two members of his tribe had reversed their decision to run for election to support his candidacy.

The IAF's third candidate is Nimr Al Asaf, who is competing for his clan's votes against two other candidates.



Mr. Kojak, the IAF candidate for the Circassian seat, is challenged by three other Circassians of whom at least one, Munir Souber, has the support of the majority of the community. Observers say the Circassians do not see Mr. Kojak as their top choice because he is running on the IAF ticket and are more likely to support Mr. Souber. And even though Mr. Kojak has a strong base in his hometown of Naour, his chances are reduced by the new electoral rules which deny him the second or third votes of IAF supporters from outside the Circassian community.

What could work against Mr. Souber, however, is the expected split of the Circassian vote among the other two candidates, Adel Ramadan and Zahdi Noor.

Another Islamist group, the moderate Islamic Dur'an which includes Christians in its ranks, is fielding two candidates in the district, but observers believe the movement would not be able to wrest much of the Islamists' votes from the IAF.

"The Islamist vote will go to hardcore Muslim Brotherhood candidates" said Mr. Shahwan, who is seeking reelection.

Despite the split among the vote of the Ahmadi tribe, observers expect former Deputy Ahmad Al Abbadi to win the majority of the tribe's votes, especially that he has the support of the 1,200 eligible voters of the Sakameh clan, an offshoot of the Abbadis.

While some observers say the split of the Ajarmeh vote in the areas of Naour and Um Al Basateen among seven candidates is expected to close the doors of the 12th Parliament before all the candidates of the Ajarmeh,

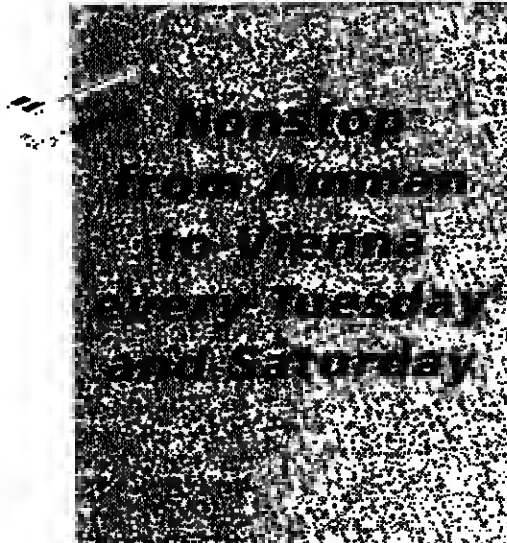
which is formed of a number of clans, Ata Al Shahwan says he will be competing for the highest number of votes with IAF candidate Hammam Said.

Mr. Shahwan says the high number of aspirants among the tribes of the Fifth District will not weaken the chances of the major tribal candidates because many of them do not have any tribal base within the tribe.

"There are people who try to promote some candidates even though they have no tribal base because they want to weaken their opponents," says Mr. Shahwan, who rejects being labelled as a tribal candidate because he says he is running as a candidate for all Jordanians.

Candidate Mijhem Adwan agrees. He says that voters are going to support candidates who can provide them with services.

Mr. Shahwan and Mr. Adwan say people are no longer interested in slogans but observers believe the "Yes, Islam is the solution" slogan of the IAF will still assure the IAF of enough support when the Fifth District's 94,897 eligible voters cast their ballots on Nov. 8.



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U.S. to defray Israel's costs of accord with PLO

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The Clinton administration has opened talks with Congress on defraying costs to Israel for carrying out its accord with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

No new appropriations will be sought, the officials said. Rather, the funds will come from cuts made in loans to Israel because it constructed new settlements, or from other programmes.

The Israeli operations that might be covered include the redeployment of security forces from Gaza and Jericho, which are to be put under Palestinian administration under the agreement with the PLO.

"What we have said to the Israelis as they incur costs with regard to the implementation of the declaration of principles, which in fact they will incur, is that we would look for ways to try and defray those costs," Dennis Ross, the department's Middle East envoy, told a conference of the National Association of Arab Americans.

"We will try to look for flexible ways to respond to the costs that they incur," he added.

Department spokesman Michael McCarry and other officials later confirmed preliminary consultations with Congress had begun.

Israel had pledged \$25 million in grants and another \$50 million in credits to help the Palestinians establish autonomy.

The United States has pledged \$75 million in grants in each of the next two years and

\$100 million in credits.

Altogether, 46 nations have promised to give the PLO and the Palestinians grants and loans of nearly \$2 billion.

Mr. Ross, who returned last week from talks with Israeli and Arab leaders, said Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Jordan were all eager to move beyond the Palestinian agreement and reach settlements on other fronts.

This conflicted with persistent reports from Syria that it is unwilling to make a commitment to another round of negotiations unless Israel signals its readiness to relinquish the Golan Heights.

No date has been set for resuming negotiations in Washington, nor has Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced plans to go to the area in the near future.

Mr. Ross also told his Arab-American audience Arab states should lift their economic boycott of Israel. "It represents a continuing refusal to Israel, seemingly a symbolic statement that Israel is not welcome in the region. Following Israel's bold step in recognising the PLO, it deserves better," he said.

He also made a strong new pitch for Arab states to end their boycott of Israel and later told reporters he believed Syria remained committed to the Mideast peace process and would not impose new conditions on talks with Israel.

On lifting the Arab boycott — an effort which Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has cautioned Washington against pushing too hard — Mr. Ross

said it must be ended and warned that if it is not, it would hurt Palestinians more than Israel.

Saudi Arabian businessmen have contacted an Israeli construction firm about buying 34 homes built for Jewish settlers and renting them to Palestinians, the firm's director said.

There have been no buyers for the homes at Karni Shomron in the West Bank since the government imposed a construction freeze on that settlement and others in the occupied territories, Falkobi director Gad Mahluf said.

"We have been contacted by a group of Saudi businessmen through a Palestinian entrepreneur who says they are interested in buying 34 villas," Mr. Mahluf said.

He mentioned no names or prices.

"We would prefer to sell to Israelis but if we do not find buyers, we will sell to the Saudis if that is legally possible," he said.

Gabriel Botbol, the mayor of Karni Shomron where some 2,000 settlers live, has asked the housing ministry to forbid such a sale.

"The homes were built for Jewish settlers. It is unthinkable for Palestinians to move in there," Mr. Botbol told AFP.

The government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin last year imposed a partial freeze on settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip as a gesture to promote the Arab-Israeli peace talks.



'NON-TECHNICALS': A Saudi Arabian soldier controls traffic in southern Mogadishu Saturday. Many vehicles in Mogadishu tend to be in this lamentable shape; others were converted into "technicals" — gun-mounted vehicles used in clan warfare before a U.N. force moved in last December. The city was quite Saturday (see page 10)

Rebels see democracy in post-Qadhafi Libya

CAIRO (AP) — In denying that Libya's army is trying to overthrow him, Muammar Qadhafi said it would not matter anyway, that even with him gone his system of non-governmental government would prevail.

But on Friday, a member of an exile opposition group that claimed to have arranged an army rebellion this month spoke of post-Qadhafi Libya: Free elections, an open press, guaranteed human rights.

"Qadhafi came to power using force. He did not win legitimate popular support," said Ibrahim Sahad, spokesman for the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL).

"Under his dictatorship, human rights are suffering, the image of Libya in the world is ruined and relations with the Arabs are damaged."

Reports surfaced last week of the rebellion in eastern Libya that Mr. Sahad's organisation claimed to have instigated.

Western diplomats in the Libyan capital Tripoli and opposition leaders abroad said the air force moved Oct. 17-18 against rebellions in Misratah and Banī Walid. Opposition leaders said the uprising was continuing and had spread to Al Zawiyah, 50 kilometres west of Tripoli, and Tarhuna, about 50 kilometres south of the capital.

The NFSL, considered the largest Libyan opposition organisation in exile, said the insurrection was a coup attempt that it had orchestrated.

Colonel Qadhafi answered the claim for the first time in a nationally televised speech

Thursday night. He accused the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the British intelligence services of fabricating the stories to demoralise the Libyans.

"We have in front of us a blatant lie," Col. Qadhafi told university students and teachers. "We are the witnesses and we know that nothing has happened, whether in Misratah or anywhere else."

Anyway, he said, "if Muammar Qadhafi dies and a thousand Muammar Qadhafis die, the people's congresses will go on and the people's committees will go on and nobody can change this system."

But in a telephone conversation from Washington, Mr. Sahad said: "We are aiming at setting up an alternative system."

If the front overthrows Col. Qadhafi, he said, it would establish a transitional civilian council to prepare elections for what he called a national founding assembly. It would draft a constitution to be put to a referendum, with parliamentary and presidential elections to follow its enactment, he said.

The front envisions "multi-party rule, freedom of the press and respect for human rights," Mr. Sahad said.

And, he said, "the incident, the coup attempt, happened. We have detailed information about it."

Outside experts on Libya say Col. Qadhafi has ruled virtually alone since taking power in 1969, except for an inner core of aides. He has cracked down hard on opposition and sent agents to liquidate activists in Europe and Egypt during the

Muammar Qadhafi

1980s. In the last six years, Col. Qadhafi has somewhat liberalised his country's economy. But it has been undermined for more than 18 months by international sanctions of the U.N. Security Council to punish Libya for refusing to surrender for trial in the United States or Britain two Libyans accused of blowing up a Pan American airliner in December 1988.

Some reports have said economics, not politics, led to the unrest that began Oct. 11, that it grew from the regime's failure to pay soldiers' salaries for up to six months. There also is believed to be discontent in the ranks over shortages caused by the U.N. sanctions.

Experts have said this is Col. Qadhafi's worst problem with the military since a 1986 rebellion. The armed forces are believed the only Libyan power centre capable of dislodging him.

Henry Schuller, a Libya expert at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said the uprising will prove troubling to the Libyan leader.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq says Iran shells border areas

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq has accused Iran of shelling Kurdish border areas, killing or wounding scores of civilians including women and children. The ruling Baath Party newspaper, Al Thawra, told Iranian rulers that similar shelling led to the outbreak of the long war between Iran and Iraq in 1980. The official newspaper Al Iraq said Iranian gunners had killed or wounded scores of people, including women and children, in Kurdish towns and villages. "Today they (Iranians) are pushing to cross Iraqi borders and inflict harm on the Iraqi citizens by mounting dangerous military operations, using warplanes and artillery," Al Thawra said. "Tehran's rulers must realise that acts like these are dangerous and are no different from those which led to the eight-year war," it said.

Israel seated in General Assembly without a fight

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Israel's General Assembly credentials were accepted Friday without a major challenge by Arab states, reflecting the good will stemming from the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace accord. "The approval of Israel's credentials is a sign the U.N. is ready to express the dramatic changes in the Middle East and we are very encouraged," Israeli Ambassador Gad Yaacobi told reporters. "For seven years our credentials were opposed, and now after so many years a dramatic change is taking place," he said. Israel has been a U.N. member since 1949. But for the past seven years, Arab and Muslim states have challenged Israel in the credentials committee of the General Assembly. The United States and its allies each year successfully blocked the efforts to unseat Israel. Friday's decision had been expected after Arab states decided to drop their opposition to Israel's participation in the assembly.

German envoy says FIS may be right

RABAT (R) — The German ambassador to Morocco said he thought Muslim fundamentalists fighting the Algerian government might have right on their side. Ambassador Manfred Wülfried Hoffmann, himself a Muslim, said in a lecture in Rabat Thursday night that the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), the main Muslim movement in Algeria, could be the contemporary equivalent of the National Liberation Front (FLN), which fought French colonialism in Algeria from 1954 to 1962. "Terrorism is legitimate in a war of liberation... FLN terrorism was legitimate against French colonialists. So FIS fundamentalist terrorism could be legitimate against FLN leaders who behave like the French did," Mr. Hoffmann said.

'Saudi-Thai relations on the mend'

BANGKOK (AFP) — Thailand's relations with Saudi Arabia, severely strained for several years, are thawing and full diplomatic ties may be restored soon, Deputy Foreign Minister Sarni Pitsanwan said Saturday. Mr. Sarni, who returned recently from a five-day fence-mending mission to Saudi Arabia, said Saudi officials had expressed their satisfaction with Thailand's efforts to resolve a long-running jewellery theft scandal involving Thai police. The theft of jewellery by a Thai servant who fled back to Bangkok with the loot was one of several incidents which contributed to a sharp deterioration of relations between the two countries since 1985. The servant was arrested and police recovered most of the Saudi Arabian owner's jewels, which were subsequently returned to the Saudi Arabian owner, a prince, was fake and many pieces are still missing. Eight people, all but one of them policemen, are currently on trial on charges of embezzlement. Saudi Arabia downgraded its mission to Thailand here after four of its embassy officials were murdered in 1989 and 1990. Thailand blamed international terrorism for the killings, an explanation Saudi officials said they accepted. Another incident which strained relations was the disappearance and murder in 1990 of a Saudi businessman.

Streisand to perform peace concert

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Barbra Streisand has agreed to perform at a concert for peace featuring Israeli, Palestinian and other international artists, a senior Palestinian official told Al Israel daily. Nabil Shaath, a senior adviser to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat, said Streisand and other internationally famous artists had agreed to perform in the concert, the Maariv daily said. He said Mr. Arafat himself had signed a deal with a U.S. agent to get the concert going. The management of the La Scala Opera House in Milan had expressed interest in hosting the concert, Dr. Shaath said. The newspaper brought Dr. Shaath together with Ofra Haza, Israel's top recording star, because Dr. Shaath had told reporters he was a great fan of hers. Maariv published the transcript of the meeting between the two, which took place on Monday in Tabá, Egypt, where PLO-Israeli peace talks are taking place. Dr. Shaath asked Ms. Haza to perform at the concert and she readily agreed. "The first time I heard your incredible voice, I asked, who is that?" Dr. Shaath told Ms. Haza, who sings in Arabic as well as Hebrew and who has scored successes among Arabs despite a boycott on Israeli singers.

Spanish bank in joint Palestine venture

MADRID (R) — Banco Espanol de Credito-Bancos has reached agreement with a group of Mideast-based companies and private investors to create a company based in Gaza and capitalised at \$60 million. A Bancos spokesman said on Friday the bank would put up \$12-\$15 million of the capital and that the company would invest in infrastructure, cement and a distribution network for essential goods in the new Palestinian zone. The other shareholders are Israeli industrial group Koor Industries, Moroccan group Omnium Nord Africain (ONA) and a group of Palestinian investors headed by Javid Gusein. The spokesman said it was also expected that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would take a stake in the company. The plan later on is to list its shares in New York, with the goal of raising \$100 to \$150 million in additional capital. Bancos Chairman Mario Condé will this weekend take part in the Jerusalem business Conference 93. He will also meet Israeli Finance Minister Abraham Shochat and on Monday lunch with Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. Bancos is Spain's third largest bank and has more than \$50 billion in deposits.

'Reagan directed Iran- contra deal'

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. News World Report says a special prosecutor has concluded that former President Ronald Reagan personally directed illegal arms shipments to Tehran in the Iran-contra affair.

The news weekly in a press release Friday cited unnamed sources who have read the final draft of a report by special prosecutor Lawrence Walsh filed with a federal appeals court in August and kept sealed since.

The report will contend that Mr. Reagan personally directed national security aides Robert McFarlane and John Poindexter at critical junctures during the secret arms shipments in 1985 and 1986, according to the magazine.

The magazine, in its Nov. 8 issue hitting newstands Monday, also says that Mr. Reagan, former Attorney General Edwin Meese and former Defence Secretary Caspar

Weinberger engaged in a "broad conspiracy" to conceal the shipments that included constructing a misleading chronology of the scandal that was given to Congress.

Mr. Reagan's attorney, Ted Olson, was not immediately available for comment. Mr. Weinberger's attorney was also not available.

The office of special counsel Walsh, in the process of closing down, said it would have no comment on the report and referred inquiries to the court where the report was filed.

The White House-run scheme to sell arms to Iran, for use against Iraq, and divert proceeds to Nicaragua's contra rebels despite a congressional ban on aid to the contras prompted the worst crisis of Mr. Reagan's presidency.

Mr. Walsh's investigation of the affair has come under criticism for its seven-year life with few convictions. Mr. Poindexter, a retired

navy rear admiral who was on the National Security Council in 1985 and 1986, was convicted in 1990 of lying to Congress, obstructing congressional investigators, and conspiring to cover up the secret arms sales.

Mr. McFarlane, Mr. Poindexter's predecessor as national security adviser, pleaded guilty in 1988 to covering up misdeeds.

U.S. news also says that Mr. Reagan, despite repeated denials, knew that National Security Council aide Oliver North was in charge of aiding the contras in violation of the congressional cutoff of U.S. military assistance.

Mr. North, a former Marine lieutenant-colonel expected to run for a Virginia seat in the U.S. Senate next year, was convicted in 1989 of obstructing Congress, destroying government documents and accepting an illegal gratuity.

'Right of passage' — perennial but varying in Afghanistan

Agence France Presse

MAZAR-E-SHARIF. Afghanistan — A small teenager with a masked face and a nervous stutter, clutching a kalashnikov assault rifle more than half his height, suddenly appeared in the middle of the highway linking Mazar-e-Sharif and Kabul.

Stopping vehicles approaching from both directions he ordered the drivers to pay what is called in Afghanistan a "right of passage" — an unofficial toll that is actually no more than highway robbery.

The youthful toll gatherer imposed a nominal but fixed amount on vehicles depending on the number of passengers, the amount of cargo transported, and perhaps

most importantly of all — the ethnic group to which the driver belonged.

Pushuns, whose native tribal lands are far to the south, paid the maximum toll, Tajiks, geographic kinsmen to Uzbeks, half this amount and Uzbeks went free of charge.

The toll-collector needless to say, was an Uzbek. The drivers obeyed, as usual, without showing any kind of resistance; on the contrary they stretched their hands wide and smiled with helpless resignation.

But this was not to turn out a profitable day for the youth, as from one of the vehicles there emerged a massive Uzbek, huge moustache bristling, who descended on the highwayman and grabbed him by the scruff

of his neck, causing him to drop his rifle. He then beat the would-be bandit.

Most of those watching were surprised, but one advanced the explanation that the man doing the beating was the youth's commanding officer.

The boy's mistake: "He tried to be a freelance thief. He didn't get the permission of his commanding officer."

While the last act of the roadside force was a little unusual, being held up is not. The overland journey from Mazar-e-Sharif to Kabul takes a minimum 12 hours, depending on the number of hold-ups, but the wise traveller never anticipates, when he will arrive.

On this trip there were more than 120 stops, most of which were between Mazar-e-Sharif and the impressive 27-kilometre-long Salang Tunnel.

This sector of the northern highway is mostly controlled by troops loyal to the Uzbek ex-communist militia warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostam, who now heads a front called the National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan, or Junbish for short.

In Mazar-e-Sharif banners hung in the street proclaimed Junbish's responsibility to defend Islam, democracy, peace, the honour and dignity of the people and the integrity of Afghanistan.

Travellers could be forgiven for wondering which was harder, upholding the noble aims stated on the banners or protecting people using the roads.

In one of the worst incidents during the trip an officer at a military checkpoint hit the driver with a rifle, cutting his face and closing one eye.

The officer wanted to siphon some petrol from the car, but the driver protested saying just a day ago he had given the officer's commander 10 litres of fuel, which the commander had asked for to cook a sheep he said he had bought.

Another passenger had to take charge of the car as the driver couldn't see properly, and although the Salang Tunnel is not the normal place to be stopped to pay "taxes", the passenger, fearing this, drove quickly.

This year's winter snow was not expected for a month, but that day the first snow suddenly began falling,

and no one was optimistic that the tunnel would remain open to traffic in winter.

"Every snow-pow and shovel provided to clean this tunnel has been looted, and the staff have fled," observed the driver.

"The main station for ventilating the tunnel is not working because of the oil shortage," he added.

On the last leg of this journey, between Salang and Kabul, the local gunmen were more of an annoyance than a real threat. They did not demand money for fuel, but merely cigarettes, or a ride for a friend or relative.

The best way to hitch-hike in Afghanistan is not to raise the lowly thumb and hope, but to stand next to a man with a Kalashnikov.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 Film: "Comme Un Bateau La Mer Un Moins"
19:00 News in French
19:15 France Sur
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Bill Cosby Show
21:18 Thirtynothing
22:00 News in English
22:20 Before Columbus
23:15 The Golden Palace

PRAYER TIMES

06:29 Fajr
05:47 (Sunrise) Duha
11:19 Asr
14:24 Maghreb
18:10 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Svetitsk, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 63785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 62266

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 62543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assiuta International Church Tel. 624195
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 624195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675591

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance of scattered showers, and winds will be easterly moderate occasionally becoming southwesterly. In Amman, it will be partly cloudy with a chance of showers and winds will be southerly moderate and seas rough.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 14/23
Aqaba 21/33
Deserts 12/27
Jordan Valley 20/32

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 27, Aqaba 34, Humidity readings: Amman 28 per cent, Aqaba 29 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Ramzi Mzawi 794788
Dr. Khalil Al Jishi 740740
Dr. Mohamed Al Jishi 62222
Dr. Mohammed Lubadeh 68358
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 783336
Al Asama pharmacy 637055
Nabouk pharmacy 62672
Al Salan pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeitani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632

JERUSALEM:
Dr. Ali Al Omari 273032
Alqada pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Akram Haddad 985390
Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue 199
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Fire Brigade 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 843402
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 603300
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 772111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 06-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381332
Khalifah Maternity, J. Amn 642816
Abdali Maternity, J. Amn 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeitani 664174
Shmeitani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 843843
Al-Muasher Hospital 667279
The Islamic, Abdali 66612737
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Jalun, Al-Muasher 7770123
Al-Bashe, J. Ashraf 7811126
Army, Marzi 89161115
Queen Alia Hospital 60224050
Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital (09)98732
Al-Hilma Modern Hospital (09)99900

JERUSALEM:
Pleasant Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272755
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:15 Agaba (RJ)
08:30 Damascus (RJ)
08:45 Jeddah (RJ)
09:15 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:30 Bahrain (RJ)
09:45 Doha (RJ)
10:00 Brunei (RJ)
10:15 Riyadh (RJ)
10:30 Cairo (RJ)
10:45 Bangkok (RJ)
11:00 Seoul (RJ)
11:15 New Delhi (RJ)
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Hungarian trade exhibition opens

Visiting officials urge Jordanian businessmen to take initiative in boosting exports to Hungary

A Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A Hungarian trade exhibition opens its doors in Amman Sunday, offering a glimpse into what the former East bloc country did offer for exports.

While the event serves to highlight Jordanian-Hungarian economic and business relations as a concept, it also aims to surface the lopsided trade balance, which is heavily in favour of Hungary. Senior Hungarian officials organising the exhibition said it was up to Jordanian businessmen to take the initiative in campaigning for the sales of their products in Hungary, which transformed its economy from a centrally-planned to a free-market since 1990.

The exhibition, formally titled "Second Hungarian Business Days," includes a variety of Hungarian products ranging from foodstuffs and garments, tiles, cosmetics, and detergents to steel, wood and rubber products as well as light engineering products.

"Our idea is to present the 'new Hungary to Jordan,'" said János Szentmáry, director-general of the Ministry of International Economic Relations of Hungary, who flew to Amman for the occasion.

Mr. Szentmáry said his country, once part of the Eastern Bloc's Comecon trading group, had undergone dramatic changes since 1990 with sweeping reforms in the political and economic systems.

"Ninety-three per cent of all imports are now liberalised," Mr. Szentmáry told a press gathering Saturday. It means that no import licences are required except for the arms such as firearms, textiles and some defence-related products, he explained.

Total Western investment in Hungary totalled \$5.5 billion in the middle of this year, he said, citing it as an example of "investor confidence" that transformed the country.

Jordanian-Hungarian trade has always been in the favour of Hungary, with total imports of Hungarian products ex-



Hungarian Commercial Counselor in Amman Tibor Toth (left), Director General of International Economic Relations Bela Szentmáry (centre) and János Szentmáry, Director of International Economic Relations, Saturday hold a press conference at the Hungarian embassy in Amman. (Staff photo by Aynsley Floyd)

pected to be less than half a million dollars in 1993 while the Kingdom's imports from Hungary are expected to be around \$17 million.

Mr. Szentmáry and Hungarian Commercial Counselor in Amman Tibor Toth, as well as János Szentmáry, another senior Ministry of International Economic Relations official, emphasised that Jordanian businessmen had to make a serious effort to market their products in Hungary.

Organising Jordanian trade shows and keeping constant contact with Hungarian businessmen are essential to develop trade links, stressed counsellor Toth, who said he was offering information on Hungarian markets to Jordanian businessmen. But that is not enough, the officials stressed.

"Without personal contacts and visits, business is not possible at all," said Mr. Szentmáry, pointing out that Hungarian exporters frequently visited Jordan as well as other countries to familiarise buyers with what they could offer.

In the wake of the political and economic changes in Hungary and the new laws and regulations that followed, the country is on its way to becoming a "fully functional capitalist" society and gaining eventual membership in the European Community (EC), said Mr. Szentmáry.

As such, he pointed out, the government had little control on imports except the protected seven-per cent category aimed at safeguarding the interests of Hungarian manufacturers.

In sum, he made it clear that Jordan and its businessmen could not hope to have the Hungarian government taking the lead in importing Jordanian products.

"If the quality and prices are competitive and if Jordanian products are properly promoted, then there could be a good market for Jordan in Hungary," he said.

Mr. Toth said Jordan and Hungary were still bound by a trade agreement dating back to 1976. Under this agreement the two countries offer each other "reciprocal and unconditional most favoured nation status."

Jordan also enjoys an additional, unilateral general system of preferential treatment under which Jordanian products are subject to reduced customs duties in Hungary, he said.

More than two-thirds of Hungarian exports to Jordan are raw materials and semi-finished products used by Jordanian industries, including pharmaceuticals, Mr. Toth said.

The civil aviation authorities of the two countries are working on an air transport agreement, and flights between Amman and Budapest could start next year, he disclosed.

Mr. Szentmáry said Hungary fully supported the Middle East peace process and was confident that the recent breakthroughs in Arab-Israeli peacemaking would eventually lead to peace, "which will offer many opportunities for business and joint ventures."

The "Second Hungarian Business Days," organised in cooperation with the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, will be open until Nov. 2.

Products on display will not be offered for sale, but company representatives could book orders for dispatch at a later date.

European authorities to comply with Jordanian food shipment regulations

COPENHAGEN (Petra) —

Concluding a five-day visit to Denmark, Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas said that the Danish and European Community authorities now accept Jordan's position on measures to be adopted in shipping European cheese and other food products to Jordan.

The Jordanian delegation has presented documents proving that the Kingdom's decision to accept only foodstuffs that have been stored under a maximum temperature of 16°C was justified according to international standards and specifications, said the minister.

In a statement quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Malhas said the cheese that used to be shipped in containers to Jordan was stored at 25°C and thus was unfit for human consumption and rejected by the health authorities in the Kingdom.

During a visit to the Danish ports, the Jordanian team discovered that the containers used to despatch foodstuffs to other European countries and the United States differed from those that have been used to ship cheese and other food products to areas in the Middle East including Jordan, said the minister.

He said containers in which cheese was shipped to the Middle East sometimes rendered the dairy product inedible, added Dr. Malhas.

Jordan demanded that the cheese and other foodstuffs be shipped to Aqaba in proper containers and at temperatures not exceeding 16°C, and the demand has been accepted, said Dr. Malhas.

Delegations from France and Germany, which also ship foodstuffs to the Kingdom, met with the Jordanian delegation in Copenhagen to discuss the issue, said the minister, adding that Jordan made it clear that the new shipping requirements would go into effect January 1, 1994.

Dr. Malhas, who described the visit as highly successful, said he proposed to one of the main powdered milk factories to use better quality and smaller bags for packing the milk to protect it from fluctuating temperatures and atmospheric pressures.

The Danish plant has accepted the idea which, the minister said, would mean a reduction in the price of the smaller size packets of powdered milk by at least 30 per cent.

Furthermore, the delegation and the Danish food authorities have agreed on offering Jordanian personnel training in laboratory testing of foodstuffs and also consented to a Jordanian request to set up and supervise similar laboratories in Jordan, according to Dr. Malhas.

The minister was accompanied by two senior officials from the ministry of health.



Abdul Rahim Malhas

Public mining company plans new production

AMMAN (Petra) — The Public Mining Company (PMC), whose major shareholder is the government, plans to start new projects to produce industrial sand, plaster and other materials, according to company General Manager Youssef Nimri.

Set up in 1973, the company is involved in mining, processing and marketing of industrial rock minerals, as well as other similar or supplementary activities.

The PMC is one of Jordan's major companies and its shareholders include government-affiliated companies and banks, said Mr. Nimri.

Last year the company paid JD 500,000 in income tax to the treasury, he added.

Without going into details about JPMC's successes in previous years Mr. Nimri said the total sales of the company this year are expected to reach JD 1.8 million, registering a significant increase over previous years.

Referring to the main fields of mining Mr. Nimri said the PMC extracts and markets limestone, dry clay, dolomite, glass granite, and marble, among other materials.

Since its establishment, the PMC has set up quarries and mines for its work in Fuhes, Suheili, Ajloun, Sahab, Khaldieh, Rasheedieh, and Ain Al Bashra.

The company's products are mainly marketed in Jordan and are demanded by factories manufacturing ceramics in Sahab and Ajloun, and white cement in Khaldieh, Mafrq and Ain Al Bashra, according to Mr. Nimri.

He said the company also owns three other mines that extract plaster which is sold to the cement factory in Fuhes.

He said that the company was closely cooperating with the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) to carry out pilot projects.

Training hospital to open on JUST campus

AMMAN (Petra) — Work on the construction of the King Abdullah Training Hospital on the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) campus will start in mid-November and take 44 months to complete, JUST Vice-President Fayez Khasawneh announced here Saturday.

Speaking after the signing of a contract with the Spanish construction firm that won the tender to implement the project, Dr. Khasawneh said that the hospital will train medical students and also serve the citizens of Ramtha and other parts of northern Jordan.

Noting that the hospital will cost about JD 48 million, Dr. Khasawneh said that the agreement stipulates that 25 per cent of the works be executed by Jordanian contractors serving as subcontractors for the Spanish firm.

China, Jordan to extend environmental protection accord

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) and the Institution of Science and Technology of China have agreed to extend a bilateral agreement on cooperation in environmental protection, according to a delegation which has just returned from a visit to China.

The delegation toured Chinese facilities and installations designed to protect the environment, said team head Kamel Ajlouni.

Dr. Ajlouni, who is also president of the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), said that he told his Chinese hosts that JUST was willing to receive and cooperate with Chinese researchers.

During the two-week stay the Jordanian team also visited China's National Environmental Protection Agency NEPA in Beijing and an environmental monitoring centre, where they were briefed on various programmes and functions, according to Ali Abanda, a member of the delegation.

Dr. Abanda, who is director general of the Department of Meteorology, told the Jordan Times that these facilities, of which there are 200 branches or stations around the country, have instruments that measure the degree of pollution affecting water, soil and the atmosphere and can determine the types of pollutants.

In Teijin, a city with a population of 14 million, the delegation inspected a waste water treatment plant and were briefed on the process of analysing underground water resources, said Dr. Abanda.

He said agreement has been reached on intensifying mutual cooperation between Jordan and China in cloud seeding and precipitation enhancement in order to increase rainfall.

He added that Jordan has gained some experience and modern technology in this field, and a Chinese team will be arriving here later to discuss ways of benefiting from the techniques to induce rain.

Jordanian team also included Talal Akasheh, head of the Environment Division at the HCST and Mohammad Hanbali from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

Organised in cooperation with the Arab League Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ALESCO), the workshop is attended by 34 participants specialising in technical education and school supervision and inspection from 15 Arab countries including Jordan.

The organisers said that the workshop entails lectures, practical applications for producing materials for teaching and discussion of several Arab countries related experiments.

If teacher training is to be successful, modern technological aids have to be used on the widest possible scale, said Dr. Masri.

He said that to promote the sciences curricula the ministry has set up centres to manufacture laboratory equipment at cost price, employing locally produced materials as well as special programmes for technical education.

Addressing the opening session of a training workshop for teacher trainers in technical education, Dr. Masri said that the introduction of computers falls under the third education-

development scheme carried out by the ministry as part of the educational system overhaul.

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A new medical school — what are the needs?

By Kathrine Rath

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A new medical school is planned in Jordan, a proposal which is seen by the Ministry of Education as a wider move for students aspiring to study medicine but others call for a study to be conducted to find out what are the specific needs of the Kingdom in this field.

The Applied Science University (ASU), which opened its doors for students two years ago, is planning to establish a medical college in accordance with its 10-year plan approved by the Supreme Council for Higher Education.

It will be the first private medical school in Jordan. There are two medical schools in the Kingdom today, both are state-owned, the Medical Faculty at the University of Jordan, recently celebrated its 21st anniversary. The other, at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), was established in 1983.

According to ASU founder and chairman of the board of directors Seif Ramahi, the proposed medical school intends to adopt an Anglo-American teaching model. For example, the entry requirements will correspond to British and U.S. standards as well as those set by the Supreme Council for Higher Education.

Although the college is still in its early phase of planning, contacts have already been made with several renowned universities and medical institutions in the United States and the United Kingdom. Dr. Ramahi said in an interview with the Jordan Times. The aim is to establish a medical school at the ASU.

medical school which will conform to standards in leading Western medical teaching institutions. This is meant to facilitate future international exchanges of medical students and create better opportunities for the students to specialise after finishing their basic degree.

The construction of a teaching hospital is planned on the ASU campus in Shafa Badran, and when completed, the hospital will contain sections for all the medical specialties that will be taught at the medical school, as well as an out-patient clinic, Dr. Ramahi said.

In line with the general policy of the ASU, which puts the main emphasis on qualifications, the teaching staff at the medical school will be recruited from among Jordanians, according to Dr. Ramahi.

If qualified Jordanians are unavailable, other Arab applicants will be given priority over non-Arabs, explained Dr. Ramahi, who is also a professor of diplomacy at the ASU.

As the ASU attaches great importance to keeping up-to-date with developments in the various scientific fields, it offers, Dr. Ramahi said, an exchange programme with foreign medical teaching institutions is envisaged for the medical school. Prominent professors and doctors will be invited to visit the ASU and give lectures to the medical students as well as to students in the para-medical sciences taught at the ASU, he added.

The ASU, which was the first private university to be approved by the Supreme Council for Higher Education, was originally established as a university for children of Jordanians working abroad.

According to Dr. Ramahi, only five to seven per cent of the seats at the public universities are reserved for children of expatriates, which makes it more difficult for these children to be accepted at the university than those passing their tawjihi in Jordan.

Expatriate workers often send their children to study at universities outside the Arab World. With an emphasis on quality of education and with fees which are "much lower" than those of Western universities, the aim of the ASU, according to the founder, was to attract these students and educate them in Jordan. This is also the philosophy behind the project for the medical school.

More than 65 per cent of the students currently enrolled at the ASU, are children of Jordanians working in the Gulf, Dr. Ramahi said.

According to the dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Jordan, Ala Uddin Toukan, the number of students going abroad to study medicine has drastically decreased in recent years. This, he said, can be attributed to the weakening of the dinar followed by a reduction in the number of scholarships given by the government, as well as to political developments in Eastern Europe, which hosted a significant number of Jordanian students during the communist era.

Jordan now graduates approximately 160 doctors per year — about 100 from the University of Jordan and around 60 from JUST.

Since 1987, the pressure has increased on the faculty of medicine to accept a larger number of students, Dr. Toukan said.

Dr. Toukan pointed to the high costs of training doctors and said that several medical school graduates were unemployed.

He hinted, though, that unemployment in the sector was created by societal emphasis that places pressure on high school graduates to pursue studies in this "prestigious" field.

The number of medical students enrolled at the University of Jordan exceeds the teaching capacity and the facilities available at the faculty of medicine, which started out with 40 students per year, increasing to a comfortably manageable 60 in the late 70s and early 80s, according to Dr. Toukan. But the capacity has not been improved with the increase in the number of students, he maintained.

It would appear then that the ASU medical school could be able to take some of the pressure off the public universities when it opens in the future.

But Dr. Toukan expressed certain reservations concerning the establishment of a new medical school in Jordan. He questioned the need for graduating more doctors and indicated that even the current number of graduates might be too high.

He called for better planning in this area and an initiative to study the needs of the country for medical doctors. Apparently, no such study has ever been conducted in Jordan.

The study should not only concentrate on the total number of doctors required, Dr. Toukan said, but should also look at the geographical distribution of doctors as well as the types of specialists needed in the Kingdom.

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WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

★ Beni Hammad fall exhibition: "Autumn Leaves" at the Jordan Contractors Association Building (near the American Embassy in Abdoun) 10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

★ Exhibition of ceramics and coloured glass by artists Khalid Mahabneh and Basel Tarawneh at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Jerash gems by Paula Williams-Brown and portraits by Ahmad Issawi at the Gallery Hotel Jordan Inter-Continental (8:00 a.m. - 7 p.m. daily except Friday).

★ Art exhibition by Iraqi artist Mukhlis Al Mukhlis

entitled "Colours on Black Paper" at La Casa Exhibition Hall (5th Circle).

FILMS

★ Film entitled "The King and I" at the American Center at 6:00 p.m.

LECTURES

★ Lecture in Arabic by Mr. Faisal Al Hourani entitled "Authority and Opposition in the Palestinian Arena" at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation at 6:00 p.m.

Jordan Times

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Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

The risks the infant Palestinian economy runs

The gross domestic product (GDP) in Palestine, i.e., the West Bank and Gaza Strip, is roughly \$3 billion, while the gross national product (GNP) may reach around \$4 billion. The exceptionally wide difference between the two figures is a result of the substantial remittances received from expatriates in the Gulf states and labourers working in Israel.

The heart of a Palestinian infant economy is supposed to start beating as of 1994. However, grave risks are abundant and should be taken into account from now. Some of those risks can be minimised if precautionary measures are taken, but others cannot be brought under control.

The first risk that comes to mind is that the Palestinian economy may indulge in borrowing and suddenly find itself overriden by foreign debt. Some countries, such as Japan, do not normally give grants, they only provide long-term soft loans. Like all banks, the World Bank is not in the business of giving away money. All its aid comes in the form of conditional loans with commercial interest. The softness of the loan is confined to the long duration of maturity, another temptation to overborrow.

The second risk is inflation. When an economy receives a substantial flow of external funds, it is only natural to experience inflation. Some international economists, like Stanley Fisher, estimated that the Palestinian economy is able to absorb no more than \$400 million of capital formation a year. Amounts in excess of this limit will be inflationary.

The third risk is too much dependency on the Israeli economy. The agreement principles are extremely ambiguous when it comes to politics, but very precise and detailed when it comes to economics. The agreement and its annexes specifically put the Palestinian economy under Israeli hegemony. Israel could use the Palestinian economy as a bridge to enter the

Arab World. This will harm the Jordanian economy and may influence negatively the Jordanian-Palestinian economic relations.

The fourth risk is the excessive dependency on foreign subsidies to finance investments and public expenditure of the Palestinian budget. This will not lead to an independent state and self-sufficient economy.

The Jordanian experience of depending heavily on foreign aid to cover its budget deficit is a case in point. Jordan received regular foreign grants from Britain until 1956, from the U.S. until 1967, from the Arab oil-exporting countries until 1990, and from various international sources since then.

The financial dependency in the case of Palestine is expected to be much higher than was the case in Jordan. Such a state of affairs will inevitably create big government and inflated public sector, which will become such a huge burden in the future that the Palestinian economy will not be able to sustain itself once foreign aid dries out with time.

The fifth risk is the likely submission to Israeli pressure to make Palestine a free zone, like Hong Kong, which will be a death sentence for any potential domestic industry. The agreement should be modified to allow the autonomous government to charge reasonable customs tax on imports from all sources, first to generate local revenue and second to extend some protection to domestic infant industries. Such a step will not harm Jordan's ability to export to Palestine, provided of course that Israeli products exported to the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be subjected to the same charges, which will not affect the competitive advantage of any party.

Unfortunately, it seems that the best trade deal that Jordan can get in Palestine is equal access and treatment to Israel's.

Obstacles to economic reform in the Middle East

By Andrew Cunningham

After decades dominated by state planning, Middle East governments are now embracing economic reform and liberalisation. Nearly every government in the region publicly proclaims its commitment to expanding the role of the private sector, privatising state-owned companies and eliminating distortions in monetary policy such as subsidised exchange rates and artificially low interest rates.

Encouragement of the private sector cuts across political and ideological lines: Egypt is privatising state-run companies, Morocco and Syria are encouraging private investment, the Gulf states are looking to the private sector to fund new power stations. Even Iran is tentatively encouraging outside investment and is trying to remove monetary distortions from its economy, such as unrealistic exchange rates and foreign currency controls.

The impetus for change

The impetus for such a change has been economic, not ideological, and is rooted in the inability of state planning to maintain economic growth. In the years immediately after independence, central planning was seen as essential if an industrial base was to be built quickly and scarce resources used effectively: countries such as Egypt and Algeria achieved prodigious rates of growth in this way. However, by the 1970s, state industries had become inefficient as a result of overemployment, subsidised raw materials and guaranteed markets. The sector had become a drain on the economy, rather than a stimulus, and was unable to generate investment capital for future growth.

The response has been to reduce the drain on the exchequer by disposing of loss-making state companies and using private capital to fund new projects. But to attract private capital a country needs to create the right financial environment, so exchange controls are removed, exchange rates set at realistic levels and inflation reduced.

In the Gulf, lower real oil prices since the mid-1980s have curtailed the governments' ability to fund new projects. Private wealth, however, remains enormous. As a result, Gulf governments are now encouraging the private sector to invest in major infrastructural projects. Both Qatar and Bahrain are hoping that private money will fund the expansion of power and water capacity. In Saudi Arabia, private commercial banks have taken over from the state-owned Saudi Industrial Development Fund (SIDF) as the main financiers of petrochemical expansion projects.

In its move to free-market economic policies, the Middle East is wholly in tune with the international policy trends. Following the collapse of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, economic liberalisation has been unchallenged as the new economic orthodoxy. It is reinforced by international agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) who lend their resources to countries which will dismantle the legacies of state control.

Needless to say, their resources are denied to those who will not. Yet despite East governments' public commitment to reform, progress has been faltering and half-hearted. The contrast with Eastern Europe is stark. There foreign expertise has been eagerly sought and radical solutions accepted. In Poland, the grossly subsidised exchange rate was swept away overnight. In the former East Germany inefficient factories have been closed and in Russia shares in state-owned companies have been distributed free to the population through a voucher system. The contrast seems all the greater when one considers that in some Middle Eastern countries economic reform has been official policy since the mid-1970s, most notably in Egypt with President Sadat's much-vaulted policy of *infitah*, but also in Tunisia and Algeria.

Bureaucracies at the helm
The main reasons for delay in the Middle East lie in politics rather than in economics. In the former Soviet bloc the collapse of communism removed many of the old political actors from the scene and those who have survived are forced to distance themselves from the failed policies of the past. State-led growth is inextricably linked to the former political system, now overthrown and discredited. But in the Middle East, economic restructuring is nearly always being implemented by regimes which are not only associated with the previous policies of state-led growth, but which are also determined to maintain their positions of power under the proposed new economic system.

The same is true in the Gulf states, where governments have no intention of ceding control of the crude oil industry. They want private capital to play a supplementary role, providing new capital to existing businesses, funding the expansion of utilities and establishing factories (which will play the important role of creating new jobs). The oil industry, which underpins the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, will remain in the hands of the state. In the Gulf, the encouragement of the private sector can be seen as a political safety valve, deflecting appeals for greater participation in a country's affairs into economic activities and away from politics.

Surviving economies
The desire of incumbent politicians to delay economic reform or restrict its scope is aided by the fact that economic conditions in the region are not so bad that radical change is seen as the only way out.

In Egypt, the privatisation process is at the mercy of bureaucrats who grew up in the heyday of the command economy. Three hundred and thirteen state-owned companies, which account for 70 per cent of industrial production, have been put under the control of 17 "holding companies" which are supposed either to prepare them for privatisation, or decide on how they should be restructured so as to operate efficiently and profitably. But half of the board members of the holding companies are drawn from the ranks of public sector bureaucrats and industrialists — the very people who have been administering the failed economic system which they are now charged with correcting.

Algeria's last prime minister, Belaid Abbessalem, removed from office on Aug. 21, was a key figure in Algeria's heavy industrialisation programme of the early 1970s, which was instrumental in giving Algeria one of the highest growth rates in the world. Indeed, at the time his policies were seen as a model for developing countries. Not surprisingly, he has many reservations with the market-oriented policies of his cosmopolitan predecessor, Sid Ahmad Ghozali, and since becoming prime minister last year he slowed the pace of economic reform.

In Iran, President Rafsanjani is personally committed to more liberal economic system, but is trying to avoid a backlash from his more hardline colleagues which would threaten his own position and those of his supporters. Syria too provides an example of how entrenched political systems stand in the way of economic reform. Millions of dollars of private capital are returning to Syria following the introduction of a new investment law. But it is clear that this enthusiasm for private enterprise is not a prelude to a more open economic system, in which economic power and decision-making are more widely de-fused. Syria's economy has been in dire straits and the government needs to tap into private money as a way of keeping it afloat.

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For many reasons, Middle East governments will continue to approach the subject of economic reform selectively and with caution. For all the public enthusiasm for change, the status quo still has many supporters.

Andrew Cunningham is associate editor of Middle East Economic Survey, a Nicosia-based newsletter. This article is reprinted from Middle East International.

America steps back and a demon peeps out

By Stephen S. Rosenfeld

WASHINGTON — Much of Congress and the American public are treating President Bill Clinton's new wariness about military engagement in remote hot spots as a victory of prudence over innocence: no quagmires, no more Vietnams. But it is early to take relief and nowhere more so than in respect to the president's urgent purpose of keeping weapons of mass destruction out of the wrong hands. Here the move towards disengagement has ominous implications.

Governments are constantly calculating what they need to satisfy their security needs and their political goals. This is so both for those who view the United States as a friend and those who see it as a foe. Friends wonder if it is wise to count on America in a crisis; when they see signs of slippage and retrenchment in Washington, they can fairly conclude that they must make plans to care for themselves. Those who see the United States as a foe wonder what they can get away with. Either way, for the increasing number of countries with access to the means, the road of American retrenchment leads towards nuclear proliferation.

In cold war times, the superpowers practiced "extended deterrence." They did not just act to deter attack against themselves. By written treaty or by political nod they extended their nuclear umbrellas over a far-flung array of countries locked into their respective alliance systems. It was costly and dangerous — remember the 1962 Cuban missile crisis and the 1973 Middle East war. But it deterred nuclear war and pretty much kept the demons of proliferation caged.

Now there is no Soviet Union. Nor is Russia in a position to open a like nuclear umbrella. The United States does still have a nuclear umbrella. But it no longer has the sense of a high-stakes strategic competition to invigorate its nuclear pledges. And it has a public demonstrably reluctant to back those pledges up. Or so one can conclude after viewing the recent hesitations of American policy in Somalia, Bosnia and Haiti.

Would a country that reversed course after suffering one day's casualties in Mogadishu be likely to stand up to, say, a nuclear-armed North Korea, Iraq or Iran threatening its American-allied neighbours? It is more than a little subversive just to pose the question. But it is obvious that the old assumptions about deterrence no longer have the same hold.

Nor do new doubts multiply only in respect to the familiar rogue regimes. With friends, too, problems stir. Is it conceivable that the United States would extend, and that Israel would accept, a U.S. nuclear "guarantee" as a substitute for Israel's own bomb?

Some argue — in putting the case against adding new members to NATO, for instance — that the United States is better off not increasing its obligations to countries pregnant with ethnic or territorial risk. But this is a situation where a reasonable and attractive-sounding proposition takes no seamlessly — unless we are careful — to an attitude that distances the United States from a steady international role and enlarges the instability that wise policy is meant to reduce.

On the "big issues" like proliferation, President Clinton told Ann Devroy and R. Jeffrey Smith of The Washington Post, "we have a strategy."

The administration has conscientious intentions and country-tailored programmes. But a "strategy"? That requires bringing the public into an explicit understanding of the burdens and trade-offs of an effective anti-proliferation policy.

To lighten the American load in one or another zone of current crisis has an explicit political appeal. But if the result is to signal friends and troublemakers alike that the United States is letting go, then compensatory steps have to be sought to prevent real damage to the national interest — The Washington Post.

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LETTERS

Poor race for coverage

To the Editor:

The reason I am writing this letter is to share some of my feelings with the staff of the Jordan Times.

As an expatriate, I have lived in many countries around the world. My experience exposed me to different cultures and various newspapers, as a result.

Like anybody else, the reason for reading the newspaper is to keep myself educated and to keep up with the latest happenings around the world, whether political, social, cultural or sports.

I must give the Jordan Times credit for covering the world's top news in a professional manner, but I also have to say that when it comes to sports, your coverage is rather poor. This is a fair statement considering the fact that your sports crew either ignores the latest and most important results for expatriates like me, or they do not have the professional facilities whatsoever.

OK, so you cover chess and tennis, regional football and gymnastics. But don't you think that for Jordanians, Arabs and most of the world population, soccer is the most popular topic?

Whatever happened to weekly results of the English, German, Spanish, Italian, French and other respectable football leagues? What about the American Football League?

As an expatriate, I like to sit down one morning and pretend that it is Monday morning, when it is time to check the newspaper on daily basis since April this year, and to my great disappointment, you have the worst coverage of such activities among the countries I have already visited.

My suggestion is to concentrate more on what is really important nowadays. Football is more important than chess and horse or car racing this time of the year.

Al Chazarian,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Handwritten signature: JPV in 1993

There is a genuine desire for peace

Muriel Mirak-Weissbach interviewed Sen. Kamel Al Sharif of Jordan, at the Milan conference on religious dialogue. Senator Al Sharif has previously held ministerial and ambassadorial posts in the Jordanian government. He is currently the editor of Al Dustour and secretary general of the International Islamic Council for Daw'a and Relief. He was the special envoy of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan. The interview is reprinted from the Washington-based Executive Intelligence Review (EIR).

EIR: How do you view the dramatic developments in the PLO-Israeli accord?

Al Sharif: We are witnessing a worldwide trend towards peaceful solution of all these standing problems and a genuine desire to build a new world on the basis of just peace. This is general trend. We are living in a small world, which is too much interlinked now, and any event which takes place in one part of the world affects the others; we are interdependent. So what happened in the Soviet Union and other parts of the world dramatically affects the situation everywhere, especially in the Middle East, because the international political situation and the equation of the balance of power has been dramatically disrupted. All these elements combined have led to the same trend in the Middle East. And then all the parties perhaps agree that things cannot go on forever in this manner and that insistence on power and occupation, denial of the others' right is not the solution: It would generate clashes over a period of time.

So everybody realises that the peaceful solution is inevitable if we want to avoid destructive conflicts. There are other elements which came into play, like the disposition of the Americans to solve these problems one by one and to show that their leadership in the world is beneficial to every party. All these elements combined have led to this development.

Of course, it's early to say whether things will succeed in the end, because there are still many obstacles. The real intentions are not yet known. There is also a big margin for manoeuvres — for all parties. But we are optimistic, we think that our hope is based on the realities of the situation, the reality that nobody can dominate the other, nobody is immune to internal problems; the discovery that people can find solutions whereby they can live and cooperate. Our hopes are not imaginary or fantastic, but I think, based on reality. But sometimes it is difficult to predict how the human mind functions, and there is always the possibility of unpleasant surprises; and we are waiting, waiting to see.

Q: One of the most important things will be to see whether the economic projects agreed upon will be implemented quickly, giving people on both sides reason to believe that the agreement will work.

A: We can't, at this stage, expect huge, massive projects to link the different parties before a final political settlement; you can't really have a genuine, final economic settlement without a political arrangement in the area. But keeping in mind that the recent accord is limited to certain areas and that the whole arrangement is provisional, some political arrangement could be arranged within these areas. If the Palestinians manage to solve the problems of Gaza and the enclave of Jericho in a proper manner, (and have) something they can show to the people and from there influence the economic situation of the people inside the occupied territories, who are the majority, from that base they can influence the events inside; this will be a great encouragement, no doubt about it.

But for big projects, which link, for example, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian state regionally, it's early to think of that, before the remaining issues which are vital to the solution — what is that fate of the occupied territories, what is the fate of Jerusalem, touchy sensitive issues — these are questions which have to be settled, so that we can stand on solid ground with more hope, more confidence.

Q: In Jordan initially there was hesitation in welcoming the accord.

A: Jordan — I am not in the government at present — Jor-

dan was surprised, like many parties. It was something which came against the established current of bilateral and multilateral negotiations. We were not aware of the secret negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis. But after the shock, the government said that if the Palestinians agreed, they are free to choose their way; the government gave its support. Of course, the attitude of the people is different from the government, because the government has its measures and criteria, its relations with the rest of the Arab World, international relations, coordination with the Palestinians, and it stems from basic premises which had been recognised before, that the Palestinians are free to choose their destiny and to solve their problems the way they like. The people are different. They have their own emotional and ideological outlook.

Q: In reference to the conference here, what do you think the role of Judaism, the Church and Islam can be in truly forging a peace?

A: Doubtless, the religions have a vital role to play in the confidence-building process in the whole world, not just in the Middle East. As it was stated in the U.N. Charter, war and peace are in the minds of people; this is a zone where religion can influence.... If we accept the idea that religion has a role to play, Islam can contribute to this process, because it is a religion which recognises other religions, respects their scriptures, and calls for friendship with them, which means contact based on dialogue and persuasion.

And, of course, the religious establishment everywhere has a moral strength and spiritual power which could be applied and could influence events and the policy-making process. Now, we have to pass this stage of just meeting and talking and discovering each other, to more tangible and bolder steps. This is why I called, in one of my speeches, for the establishment of a religious committee, a fact-finding committee, which can reconcile and mediate in various issues and give an opinion (from the standpoint of religion) in some of these things. I think we have reached this stage, that something should be done. We mean really to talk with the policy-makers and statesmen and influence their decisions.

Now, to come to the Middle East. I believe it's still early to talk of the role of religion in the process, because, as we see it now, it's easier to talk with the Christians, because we don't have an outstanding problem which separates us. This is not the case with Judaism; we still have an occupied territory, we still have an oppressed people, we still have occupied Jerusalem. Of course, the stand of Islam towards Judaism is no different from its stand towards Christianity. The relationship is based on respect for Judaism. We have maintained good relations with the Jews throughout history, so it's a political issue.

Unfortunately, the political movement within Judaism has overtaken the spiritual side — Zionism — so, we don't find a trend which is neutral, which you can talk to. Religion has been exploited in this Zionist movement, that has been justified by religious connotation, making it somehow difficult to start a dialogue. But again, we don't lose hope. If the outstanding political issue is solved, or it becomes clear that it is on the way to resolution, then the dialogue, even of the religious establishment, could not be far away, could not be excluded.

Q: How do you evaluate the impact of these developments on the democratisation process within Jordan?

A: I think it will strengthen the process. Jordan has adopted the democratic system. It has embarked on it genuinely in the last few years. Through its practice, it has proved to be beneficial. It has contributed to dissipating many negative aspects of public life. We're facing the future with more confidence, and we believe that democracy is the only solution to our problems. The people are convinced; we have political parties which are convinced; everybody knows where he stands and everybody has expressed his loyalty to the Constitution and to the monarchy; so I think we are sailing with a fair wind, and the future is very promising indeed. Inshallah (God willing).

Coffee in governors' offices, pardons and murder threats, women vying for seats and men vying for their attention

The 1993 elections campaign, serious as it appears, is not devoid of a light — sometimes funny — side. There are tidbits about news, views and comments about the campaign that will appear (hopefully) every day in this corner until it is all over on Nov. 8. Humour is intended in the column, in no way libel.

THE BALQA District has a few stories of its own that can prove interesting. A village in the Ghor area, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Balqa District, has 1,100 votes. But it also has a personal problem: Three of its residents, prison denizens, were the catch prize. So the village elders made it known that they would give their votes to the candidate who could find a way to help these

three people come back to their families. Since they had been imprisoned for petty crimes, one of the candidates helped them out and found himself 1,100 votes richer. If he finds a few more prisoners to release in the next ten days or so, he might even win.

A COFFEE boy working for a governor in one of the districts close to Amman, confronted his boss one day with a request to accept his resignation because he wanted to run for elections. The governor tried to dissuade the coffee boy by impressing on him that he had no chance of winning and that his money would be better spent on his family and children. But after failing to convince him, he accepted his resignation still retaining some hope that the man would change his mind.

On the day of registration for candidates, the coffee boy showed up at the governor's office to hand in his registration papers. Again the governor tried to convince the man that he would be better off coming back to his work and forgetting the whole affair had ever happened. The coffee boy, however, was looking at the whole affair in a totally different way: "It is better to be a defeated deputy than a governor."

IN ONE of Amman's more tribalistic districts, two candidates from equally important, but apparently not very friendly, tribes are vying for a seat in Parliament. Both have spent money and time recruiting voters, advertising and hanging banners. But, according to district insiders,

neither is really working to win. For as the story goes, one of them had sworn publicly that he did not care if he lost as long as the other candidate met the same fate. "And if he wins, I will kill him." The police, according to sources, are already guarding against the outcome of the elections in that particular district.

THE WOMEN in the Kingdom may yet see a winner of their gender in the 12th Parliament. As the Nov. 8 deadline nears, many Third District observers are beginning to believe that Janet Mufli, who is vying for that district's Circassian seat, may just make it. The toughest competition may actually come from Toujan Faisal, also a Circassian woman candidate who failed to muster enough

Elections '93

support in the Fifth District of Amman in 1989 and is now trying her chances in the Third District. And as if to stress the need to bring a woman into Parliament, a candidate running for the Christian seat in the same district has hung a banner asking voters to cast their votes in his favour "to lead a woman into the Parliament." A voter who saw his banner commented that he was going to listen to his advice "and vote for one of the two women running for the Circassian seat."

AN IRRED Christian candidate, Nader Abul Shaer, has had one of his women relatives appeal to women in a newspaper's ad this week.

Even though this candidate has a favoured standing, critics of this ad, which was signed by Iqbal Abul Shaer, do not think that his voters are exactly feminists. "To my educator sisters," it began, "I am a retired teacher appealing to your mind, your love-filled heart, your conscience to give your vote to the one who deserves it," the ad said. "Dr. Nader Abul Shaer has often reduced the pains of your sick and dried the tears of your children and was always the kind father, the good friend and the faithful son." Women must not care about political issues in Irred or Mrs. Iqbal Abul Shaer would have mentioned them.

NERMEEN MURAD

Germany rescues ambitious recycling scheme from scrapheap

By Nao Nakanishi
Reuters

BONN — Germany is stepping up its ambitious packaging recycling system in spite of financial problems and difficulties in reprocessing some forms of waste.

The scheme, which last month narrowly escaped bankruptcy, is the first of many the government hopes to introduce.

Environment Minister Klaus Toepfer and German industry have agreed on measures to rescue the private packaging recycling system Duales System Deutschland (DSD).

"We hope the restructuring programme will stabilise the system and ensure its survival. We have learned from experience," said Hannjoerg Hereth, chairman of DSD's new Supervisory Board.

The DSD, which grew out of Germany's 1990 package recycling regulations, aims to collect 80 per cent of used packaging and process most of it for reuse.

Consumers are asked to collect bottles, containers and wrappings, clean them and put them in special yellow bins and bags at home for collection every two to four weeks.

The scheme was set up by hundreds of manufacturers and retailers who feared Germany would deluge shops with old boxes, wrapping paper and bottles.

The DSD has been plagued by financial troubles and lack of plastic recycling capacity since the scheme began. In the latest crisis, the DSD faced a debt of \$70 million (about \$519.6 million) because only about half of 15,000 firms had handed over their fee for using the DSD's green dot logo showing they had paid for recycling the packaging.

The DSD came under criticism as environmentally-conscious Germans gathered more plastic packaging than it could handle.

These problems followed a series of scandals last year when the collected packaging was found on garbage dumps in France, Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia.

The restructuring programme, aimed mainly at securing DSD's financial base, includes creating a strict monitoring system for paying license fees.

On Oct. 1, the DSD launched a new price system to reflect higher processing costs for plastics and packaging of mixed materials from a standard fee of about two pfennigs (3.5 cents) per package.

This should help cover high recycling costs for plastic and discourage manufacturers from using packaging that is difficult to reprocess.

To limit its expenditure, the DSD has signed contracts with waste management firms which set a ceiling of 3.2 billion marks (\$1.91 billion) on their annual charges, irrespective of how much packaging the DSD gathers for them to process.

DSD is expanding its capacity and hopes to handle 350,000 tonnes of plastic next year, rising to about 800,000 tonnes by 1996. This compares to about 165,000 tonnes now.

It is also looking at building two plants in former East Germany using new technology to convert used plastic into crude oil or gas — a method regarded as the key technology for the future of reusing plastic.

The government is reviewing

its package recycling rules, which are only the first of a series of laws Mr. Toepfer envisages over the next few years.

"Because of DSD's problems, we have decided to review these proposals a year earlier than planned," said Thomas Rummeler of the Environment Ministry which is drafting similar rules for used cars, batteries, electronics and papers.

Above all, the government is considering allowing up to 30 per cent of packaging to be burned to generate energy instead of reprocessing it all into secondary raw materials.

Asked about Germany's waste exports, which angered neighbouring countries, Mr. Rummeler said: "I think our used products should be allowed to be processed abroad. Only we have to make sure it is recycled and doesn't end in a waste dump or incinerators. If they are processed properly, they can be reused. There are global markets for secondary materials," he said, adding that Germany imported almost all of its primary raw materials.

However, Guenther Theisen, chief financial official at Germany's largest waste management group RWE Entsorgung said the biggest challenge was to create demand for secondary material, supplies of

which have surged. German supplies of recycled glass, paper and cardboard has

soared in the past two years to more than 12 million tonnes from 7.5 million tonnes.

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Bureaucracy hampers Tangier offshore bankers

TANGIER (R) — Foreign investors are showing renewed interest in Tangier, a city which once flourished as a money-changers paradise at the crossroads of Europe and Africa, but bureaucracy is hampering progress.

A dozen applications from foreign investors have been received since January for a place in a zone promoted as the Tangier offshore financial centre, treasury officials say.

"The Moroccan authorities have shown willingness to go ahead with the offshore banking system... we believe in it, so we are here," Banque Nationale de Paris (BNP) Managing Director Gerard Raffaud told Reuters.

However, Morocco's ponderous bureaucracy is slowing down investors' attempts to open for business in the offshore zone.

The law creating an offshore banking zone in Tangier was published in February 1992 but the first foreign banks did not open their doors until 18 months later.

The BNP and Banque Internationale de Tanger (BIT), an offshore arm of Credit Lyon-

nais, started operations in September.

"The political climate here is stable and in favour of business, but unfortunately it takes ages to get a simple authorisation," said a French businessman.

Despite the efforts of Tangier authorities, BNP has been waiting since August for approval from Rabat to get plugged into world financial centres via satellite. Often it takes three months to get a telephone.

"You have to take one month off to go around several post and telecommunications bureaux if you want your telephone fixed," said Onoda Toshi, a Japanese businessman.

Early this year, the government set up a special body linked to the finance ministry to deal with offshore banking problems, but little has been done since, Western diplomats said.

"We are doing our best to solve urgent problems and help foreign bankers to set up their business as soon as possible," said Montassar Benani, director of the offshore zone at

be treasury.

Tangier is an ideal site for offshore banking because it is located at the crossroads between Africa and Europe.

When Tangier was an international zone between 1925 and 1956, dozens of foreign banks and money-changers dealt in all kinds of currency. Most of them fled when the zone was integrated into the kingdom.

But many Tangerines still have financial know-how from what they like to call "the good old days" when the city was a free-for-all financial paradise and tax haven.

Another advantage is that the cosmopolitan city has many residents who speak fluent English, French and Spanish.

"With its past experience as a financial centre, Tangier has moral guarantees, but bureaucracy problems are a real nightmare," a BNP manager said.

The taxation system is also an obstacle. Moroccan bankers wishing to purchase funds in the offshore zone were liable until last June to pay a 10 per cent charge on the total amount.

ASEAN economies expected to grow at 7.2%

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — South East Asia's freewheeling economies are expected to grow by an average of 7.2 per cent next year, up from an estimated 6.7 per cent this year, a government report said Friday.

But the report by the finance ministry said that the six Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) may have to contend with rising inflation.

ASEAN will remain the fastest growing region in the world compared to 2.3 per cent projected for the industrialised countries and 5.4 per cent for developing countries as a whole, the report said.

The report said that the strong economic growth in ASEAN would stem from planned public expenditure on major construction programmes, private consumption growth and increases in external demand.

Arab Gulf states tightening belts for Iraq oil resumption

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Gulf Arab states are tightening their belts to avoid a deterioration in their budget deficits when embargo-hit Iraq is allowed to resume oil exports, experts in the region have said.

Saudi Arabia and other oil heavyweights in the region are expected to offer the bigger production cuts in OPEC to readmit Iraq into the quota system after an absence of more than three years, they said.

"There is a general feeling in the region that Iraq will be allowed to resume oil exports next year," an Abu Dhabi-based economist said. "Gulf states know they will cut output more than other members to reinstate Iraq and this will depress their revenues."

According to my information, most of them have started to tighten spending to brace for that return and prevent a widening in their budget deficit."

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) had to boost oil production by more than three million barrels per day (b/d) in 1990 to make up for a loss in the market caused by Iraq's invasion of neighbouring Kuwait.

The kingdom now produces eight million b/d under an agreement by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) while the UAE pumps around 2.16 million b/d. Both states agreed to freeze output for the next six months to meet demands by Iran and Kuwait for quota rises.

But despite the increase, budget deficits persisted and they reached a record level in 1991 due to large Gulf war payments.

"Actual budget deficits in the GCC could be lower than projected this year because expenditure is being cut," an economist said. "I do not see a big change in revenues despite

a sharp rise in Kuwait's oil output. This will be offset by weak oil prices this year, in which they will range between \$16 and \$17 compared with \$18.40 in 1992."

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE — have tried to narrow their budget deficits but they have reached a limit where further major spending cuts could hurt development given the limited role of the private sector, experts said.

Kuwait has been advised by the World Bank to privatise its public services and part of the oil industry to tackle economic problems caused by a huge Gulf war loss and a sharp decline in investment income after it was forced to sell more than half its assets abroad of around \$100 billion.

"In the UAE, the private sector is being urged to boost its participation in the economy and government departments to be more rational in spending. This year, less than 50 per cent of the budget has so far been used," a UAE economy official said. "In the absence of a clear outlook on the oil market, I believe the private sector holds the key for good economic performance."

A stronger role by the private sector will enable the UAE and other Gulf states to go further in rationalising expenditure."

Greek government pledges no new taxes

ATHENS (R) — Greece's new Socialist government will impose no new taxes but will crack down on rampant tax evasion to increase revenues. National Economy Minister George Yennimatas said Friday.

"No new tax measures will be implemented," he told a news conference.

He said the battle against widespread tax evasion would be intensified to raise revenues and cover huge deficits, but he did not specify how this would be achieved.

Despite the former conservative government's efforts to fight tax dodging, the revenue growth rate was only 8.3 per cent in the first half of 1993 compared to an annual 24 per cent projected in the 1993 budget.

Mr. Yennimatas said there would be no rise in public utility charges in 1993 and he would not use state companies' profits to fill holes in the 1994 budget.

"There will be no increase in public utility rates in 1993 and 1994 for profitable public corporations," Mr. Yennimatas said.

He made clear that profits of state companies would be used to finance their investments and not the budget deficit.

Stocks strike new highs across Asia on flood of foreign investment

HONG KONG (AFP) — Stocks roared to new highs in Hong Kong, Bangkok, Sydney and Kuala Lumpur Friday as east Asian markets continued to be buoyed by massive U.S. and other foreign investment.

Market analysts attributed the unprecedented rise, which has continued over the past few weeks and hit new records Friday, to the growing strength of the region's economies and the attractiveness of its emerging stock exchanges.

"We're riding on the crest of the wave," said Nick Lee, a financial analyst with the Nomura Research Institute in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong stocks spurred to an all-time high as the blue-chip Hang Seng index gained

318.82 points, or 3.54 per cent, to close the week's trading at an all-time high of 9,329.09 in five consecutive days of gains.

This surpassed the previous high of 9,031.13 set on Oct. 18. The stock exchange of Thailand surged 111.37 points or 9.7 per cent this week as foreign funds flooded the market, closing at a new record high of 1,260.91 points, brokers said.

The Australian share market rallied at the end of the week to finish at a six-year high as overseas investors ploughed money into leading stocks.

The All Ordinaries index finished at 2,112.2 points, up 50.8 points on last week's close, while the All Industrials index gained 85.6 points to close at 3,289.6, and the All

Resources was up 23.8 points to 1,211.8.

In Malaysia, the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange composite index, which tracks 85 quality stocks, surged 25.27 points, or 2.6 per cent, to end at 971.99, surpassing Thursday's 946.72.

"Going by the bullish market trend, the key index could touch the 1,000 mark by the end of the year," said Tan Teng Boo, the chief executive of Capital Dynamics, a Kuala Lumpur-based investment advisory firm.

The Manila Stock Exchange composite index rose by 1,102.15 points or 86.7 per cent, from the first trading day of the year on Jan. 4. The rival Makati index was up by 1,340.47, or 88.10 per cent, for

the same period.

In New Zealand, the leading index of the top 40 stocks, the NZSE-40, closed at 2,159.86, up 28.68 points on the day, and 61.75 points higher for the week at yet another four-year high.

In Japan, where the economy has been sluggish, share prices rebounded sharply on the stock market with the Nikkei stock average closing 223.52 points or 1.1 per cent higher at 19,702.97. The Nikkei indicator of 225 selected issues in the major first section was a loser of 359.33 points the previous day.

However, activity in Singapore was stagnant, as the blue-chip Straits Times Industrial index moved up.

Russia threatens illegal exporters with jail

MOSCOW (R) — Russia will crack down on exports of key commodities to fight capital flight and company officials charged with wrongdoing could face up to five years in jail, senior central bank officials have said.

Russia, accused of dumping aluminium and other metals on world markets at below cost price, hopes the new rules will combat illegal exports and stabilise world markets.

Bank deputy chairman Dmitry Tulin told a news conference that strict controls on banks and customs to monitor export earnings would be back-

ed by a series of measures to fight capital flight put at \$5 billion in the first half of 1993. Some 600 banks authorised to handle foreign trade deals will act as government agents and face fines if they breach the new regulations, which take effect from Jan. 1.

Senior officials at Moscow-based oil, aluminium and metals exporters said the new controls would scare off firms which have been making millions of dollars every year by illegally exporting Russian commodities abroad.

But it is not clear how Russia, the world's biggest coun-

try, will succeed in its fight against capital flight given its chaotic and overregulated banking sector where supervision and Western-style reporting systems are non-existent.

Under the new rules, modelled on the French customs system, goods will not be allowed to leave the country unless exporters submit to customs a copy of a special "passport" document.

The passport, detailing the deal and its value, will be signed by the exporter and an authorised bank and stored in a database along with cargo documents and customs dec-

larations.

A separate "registration card" will detail bank transactions and the date when export earnings are likely to arrive.

If there is a loss of hard currency abroad due to wrongdoing by the authorised bank, it will be fined for the whole sum lost. Banks failing to report operations may have licences revoked.

Customs officers will cross-check export deals and database records on hard currency earnings to spot wrongdoing and delays.

"This will have a very favourable effect on oil

prices," said Vladislav Yefremov, a senior trader at Russia's biggest state oil exporter Nafta-Moskva.

"During two years of chaos in the oil industry, when small firms could export oil on their own, they disrupted the market by dumping cheap oil. Now only fully fledged, authorised companies will handle exports and prices will stabilise," he pointed out.

Alexander Isayev, vice-president of Russia's aluminium producers association Alumin, said the controls would not affect official exports but may scare off illegal

prices.

Nikolai Gorbunov, head of copper exports at Raznoalloy metal traders, agreed: "It will be business as usual for firms functioning legally."

Viktor Melnikov, head of the currency control at the central bank, said: "We have about one million export deliveries a year and there is a huge problem in gathering information."

"There is no guarantee against corruption, but at least on a macro-level we will be able to get signals pointing to wrongdoing," he added.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY OCTOBER 31, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carol Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A day and evening when you need to exercise caution and be careful to do nothing to irritate anyone who seems and control over your financial affairs. Act with special courtesy and kindness.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) A day when your intuitive perceptions and hunches are apt to be way off and you need to use your best judgment to sidestep a difficult problem.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Look for some special favour that you can do for a disturbed ally with whom you have contact and with whom you wish to keep in a fairly good mood.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Your best bet this day is in being of service to those who are less fortunate than you but your chance to be of helplessness is now great.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You want to let fly at one of whom you are fond because of an injustice or unkindness that person has done but it only stirs up more discord.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Put harmony first in your home today instead of trying to get conditions improved for in so doing you are all too likely to disturb equilibrium there.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) It will be difficult for you

to straighten out your conflicting standpoints as to a course to pursue in the future so study your various options.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Think about how you can have a greater abundance and to spare for your practical needs and requirements but don't do anything positive towards gaining it.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You have considerable attractiveness now and can help to relieve others of their present woes by expressing this in your contact with them.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You now need to make a special point to be understanding of one who is having a difficult time and looking for someone to take this burden.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A friend is in a good deal of trouble and if you stand by loyally it will help this person to be able to handle what could otherwise seem impossible.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Your worldly ambitions can come under attack or critical scrutiny today so make a point to rise above such and show you do a good job without qualms.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You are very much interested in some new and advanced condition that is intriguing but has some elements that require considerable more study by you.

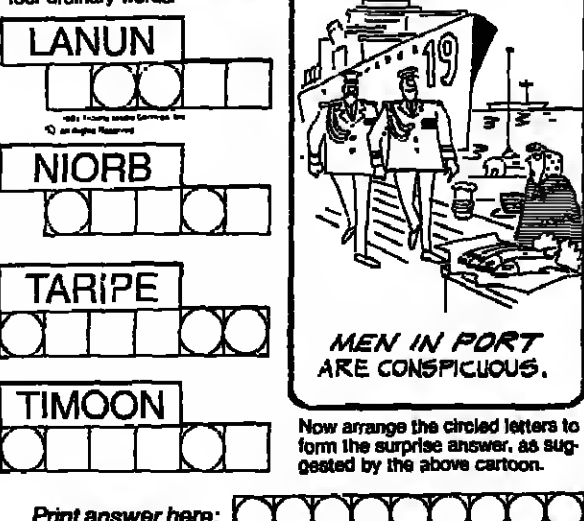
THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



"I'm not a bossy woman, am I, Stanley? ANSWER ME!"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

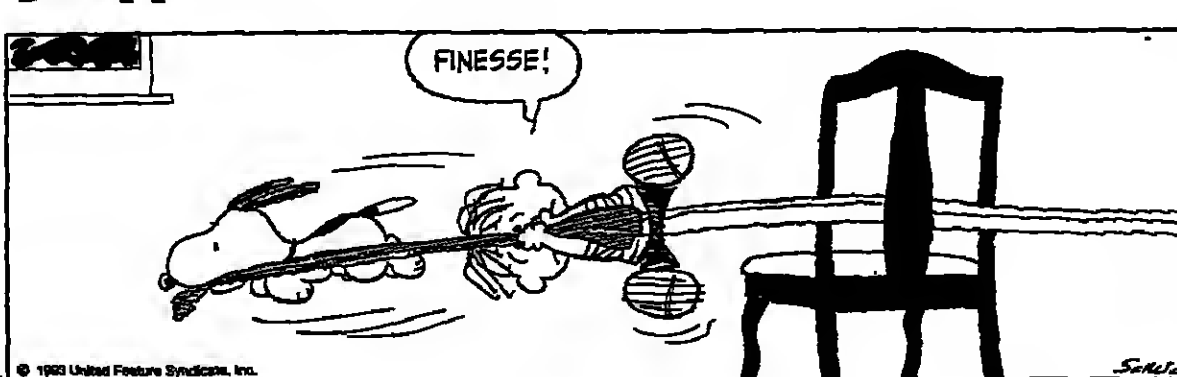


Yesterday's Jumbles: ABHOR STDIC FLUMSY DETAIN
Answers: The best part of the theater — THE STARS

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by Robert O. Wilson

ACROSS

- Boorish one
- Exhibition of anger
- Not (colloquial)
- Bean curd
- Miserable
- Swelling
- Arboreal gulf
- Author Mine
- Vote into law
- Monthly expenses
- Embellished
- Twister
- Deadly poison
- Feed the kitty
- Colorado ski town
- Damage
- System of values
- Nice happy
- Believe to be true
- Alp, to poets
- Widow
- Inane
- Keep
- Kind of
- Homewrecking
- Gabber
- Delicious drink
- Singer John
- Monster
- Concert halls
- Increase rapidly
- Care for
- Inform about
- Noodle case
- Real estate
- Way, abbr.
- Buffalo's lake
- Roman garment
- Dinner during Passover
- Hub
- Prayer ending
- Lock of hair
- Govt. agents
- Long time
- Exat
- Expectations
- Wind-blown
- Shakespearean villain
- Narrow cut
- Jumping
- Sore
- Rickshaw
- Minica
- Certain ray
- Particle
- Shed
- Unit of weight
- Study place
- Adolescent
- Poem type

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

SEAN ARAB HEBOR
ALMA DOBE GIBBA
GIMBARDABY BEAR
BEAR BARS BARBS
BOBBOR BOBE
ALICE BOBBYMAN
LUSTY BOBBY LITTE
ALMA BOBBY GINTO
YODD BOBBY BOBBY
BOBBYBOBBY BAE
BOBE BOBBY
BOBBYBOBBY BOBBY
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Angry India accuses U.S. of tilt to Pakistan over Kashmir

NEW DELHI (R) — Angry and alarmed, India has accused the United States of abandoning its previously even-handed policy on South Asia to favour Pakistan in the dangerous dispute over Kashmir, officials said Saturday.

They said U.S. charge d'affaires Kenneth Brill was summoned to the Foreign Ministry Friday to explain remarks by a senior official in Washington that appeared to question Kashmir's accession to India.

"He said there was no change in U.S. policy on the issue, but was told India regarded the remarks as a tilt towards Pakistan," one Indian official said.

The last time Delhi accused Washington of a tilt to Islamabad was before the last of the three Indo-Pakistani wars that led to Bangladeshi independence in 1971. Only recently have Indo-U.S. relations begun to mend.

At the heart of Indian alarm was the reported remark by the Washington official, who spoke to journalists on condition of anonymity, on the question of Kashmir's accession to India.

"We view Kashmir as a disputed territory and that means that we do not recognise that instrument of accession as meaning that Kashmir is forever more an integral part of India," the official was quoted by Indian newspapers as saying.

Officials said that despite an

official statement by the U.S. State Department that the United States respected the territorial integrity of India, the official's remark on the treaty of accession questioned Indian unity.

Scores of nominally independent princely states signed treaties of accession to India or Pakistan when they became independent of Britain in 1947. Kashmir, a mainly Muslim area ruled by a Hindu maharajah which initially opted for independence, was forced by invading forces from Pakistan were on the outskirts of Srinagar, its summer capital.

"The point is that if the Americans are questioning one instrument of accession, they are questioning them all," one Indian official said.

Two of the Indo-Pakistani wars have been over Kashmir and left two-thirds of it in India, where it forms the largely Hindu nation's only Muslim-majority state. The rest is under the control of Islamic Pakistan.

India is adamant that Jammu and Kashmir state is an integral part of the nation and that a settlement of the dispute over it should be settled between Delhi and Islamabad.

Washington is worried that now both countries have the ability to produce nuclear weapons, any miscalculation could trigger a devastating war. Over the last few months it has been pressing for talks to get started.

The two countries have agreed to restart early next year a dialogue suspended in August 1992.

Meanwhile six people were injured when a bomb exploded in a vegetable market in Kashmir town Saturday, the Press Trust of India reported.

The news agency said the explosion occurred in Udhampur, 65 kilometres from the Kashmir winter capital Jammu.

More than 7,000 people have died in the northern Indian state during the past four years in violence related to a Muslim separatist campaign.

The situation has been particularly tense since Oct. 15, when Indian army troops surrounded a mosque in the summer capital Srinagar to flush out Muslim militants from the shrine.

The Indian army siege of Kashmir's Hazratbal Mosque entered a third week Saturday amid hopeful claims of an imminent end to the standoff with the armed Muslim guerrillas.

A mediator for the militants, Yaqub Vakil, said an "amicable solution" was expected later in the day ending the drama.

Senior Kashmir administration and police sources echoed the hope, adding that another round of negotiations was to be held to put the final touches on a settlement.

Wajahat Habibullah, the government's sole negotiator

in the crisis, told reporters a "positive solution will be reached very soon."

A police source said the administration had promised "no tough treatment, no harassment" of the militants as part of an agreement.

No other details were immediately available.

The militants have demanded a withdrawal of the thousands of soldiers besieging Hazratbal and safe passage as conditions for a settlement, ruling out a surrender.

The government said its chief concern was to restore the sanctity of the shrine it alleges has been defiled by the armed guerrillas and to free some 60 to 70 civilians trapped in the shrine.

A hair believed to come from the beard of Prophet Muhammad is preserved in a vault inside Hazratbal, or Prophet's Place, which the authorities have long suspected to be a militant sanctuary.

Life in the Kashmir Valley including Srinagar, the hub of Muslim militancy, was meanwhile paralysed for a 15th straight day by a general strike called by rebel groups and clerics to protest the army siege.

The authorities eased a two-week-old curfew clamped over much of the city of 700,000 people, but shops and businesses, educational institutions, banks and post offices remained shuttered and vehicles stayed off the roads.



A luxury home stands in the middle of ashes and brush fires that ripped through Laguna Beach from other luxury homes that were destroyed by California (AFP photo)

Crews get upper hand on U.S. fires

LOS ANGELES (R) — Fire crews battling some of the worst wildfires in the history of southern California early Saturday appeared to be beating the infernos that destroyed more than 700 homes.

State and local firefighting authorities said they had the upper hand on the blazes that have ravaged the region for three days, but continued that the danger was by no means over.

More than 6,000 firemen launched massive land and air assaults to combat the 13 major blazes.

From the air, tanker aircraft and helicopters soaked the mountains, canyons and

ravines with thousands of gallons of water and flame retardants.

On the ground, firefighters took up shovels and shovels and brought in bulldozers to dig huge trenches. They also set controlled burns to starve the firestorms of fuel.

Authorities estimated that property damage from three days of horrendous fires that swept through five southern California counties amounted to at least \$400 million, and was likely to be much higher.

Calm, cooler weather Friday helped extinguish four wildfires and contain several others after walls of flame levelled exclusive suburbs, destroyed homes and scorched 180,000 acres (73,000 hectares) from Los Angeles to the Mexican border.

The outbreak was the first of the southern California fire storms. It started Wednesday on the eastern side of the Santa Monica Mountains and roared west to the Pacific Ocean before heading back towards its point of origin.

Along the way it destroyed ranches in the star colony of Malibu.

One of the property victims was country and western music star Dwight Yoakam whose multimillion dollar ranch house was destroyed.

Burundi tribal fighting rages on

BUJUMBURA (R) — Hutu and Tutsi tribesmen slaughtered each other in the Burundian countryside more than a week after a collapsed coup, reports arriving in the capital on Saturday said.

Prime Minister Sylvie Kinigi and some of the surviving members of the toppled government, asked by army leaders to take over the running of the Central African nation, remained holed up in the French embassy Saturday.

Burundian journalists said Saturday they had reports from the south that some troops, all

members of the minority Tutsi tribe, were killing tribesmen of the majority Hutus there.

"The main problem is that no one controls the military, juniors (soldiers) do not report to seniors, and the seniors have no government to account to," a Burundian journalist said.

"There is no authority. Practically no operational government, no operational army. It is total anarchy, just slaughter, slaughter," the journalist said.

Witnesses, including this correspondent, Friday saw the bodies of 10 people who had

just been killed in the southern settlement of Mahwa.

Foreign aid workers, the government and witnesses have said several thousand people died in tribal fighting that began after renegade troops seized power on Oct. 21, killing Burundi's first elected President Melchior Ndayaye and six ministers.

The unrest in Bujumbura sparked tribal war as the Hutus sought revenge against their traditional rulers, the Tutsis, for the murder of Mr. Ndayaye.

2 Georgian towns fall to rebels

TBILISI (R) — Russian soldiers opened fire Saturday to repulse a rebel attack just hours after they started a risky mission to guard a railway in western Georgia, a Russian military source said.

Georgian radio said government troops had retreated from two nearby towns, Senaki and Khobi, where they are battling rebels who back ousted President Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

The Russian source, a well-placed official in Georgia who declined to be identified, denied an earlier report by the Russian News Agency, Interfax, that the Russians had retreated with government forces from Senaki, an important railway town.

Botha exposes tensions in cabinet

CAPE TOWN (R) — Foreign Minister P. W. Botha has exposed tensions within President F. W. de Klerk's cabinet as South Africa's white government enters the final phase of democracy talks with black and right-wing opponents.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Awie Marais confirmed Saturday that Mr. Botha criticised cabinet colleagues at a private National Party campaign dinner this week.

Mr. Botha told questioners at the dinner that the government had bungled the communication of its position concerning a recent army anti-terrorist raid on a black-homeland capital and on sea-sawing petrol prices.

"The government has made some bad mistakes during the past few months and I apologise for them," Mr. Marais quoted Mr. Botha as saying to his dinner companions.

White Liberal opposition leader Zach De Beer said Mr. Botha or the ministers he criticised should quit the cabinet immediately and an African National Congress spokesman said Mr. Botha had undermined the known tensions within Mr. de Klerk's cabinet.

"We have known for a long time that there are serious divisions within the cabinet and this just brings them a bit into the open," ANC spokesman Carl Niehaus said.

Mr. Botha was speaking at a

party function arranged to woo affluent supporters ahead of the country's first all-race election, scheduled on April 27.

Delegates to multi-party democracy talks face a Friday deadline for agreement on an interim constitution allowing for a five-year transition from white rule to democracy under an all-race government of national unity.

Party sources and Afrikaner political analysts say Mr. de Klerk's cabinet is divided between moderates including Mr. Botha, who accept the progress made towards majority rule, and hawks who say too much has been given away to Nelson Mandela's ANC.

Arrest warrant issued for Olivetti chairman

ROME (R) — Italian magistrates Saturday issued an arrest warrant for Olivetti Chairman Carlo De Benedetti, the most distinguished Italian businessman to be drawn into the country's corruption scandal, state television reported.

Mr. De Benedetti, who turned Olivetti SPA from a small-time typewriter firm into an international computer concern, was rumoured to be out of the country and police were searching for him Saturday.

The arrest warrant was issued by magistrates in Rome who were investigating allegations that Mr. De Benedetti was linked to bribes paid to win contracts from the state telephone company, state television said.

Mr. De Benedetti's lawyer,

Marco De Luca, said he did not understand why magistrates were seeking Mr. De Benedetti's arrest because he had always cooperated with judicial authorities in the past.

"De Benedetti has recently shown his willingness to cooperate with magistrates, so I am puzzled as to why they would want to arrest him," Mr. De Luca said in a statement.

Mr. De Benedetti had admitted in the past that his firm had been forced to pay kickbacks to win contracts.

But he defended the move saying it amounted to virtual blackmail since Olivetti would have been unable to win contracts overseas had it not been seen to be a prominent domestic supplier.

Ghali urges U.S. to maintain lead role in U.N.

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.N. Secretary General Bontros Ghali issued an appeal here Friday to the United States to maintain its leadership role in the world body.

In an address to the United Nations Association of the United States (UNA-USA), Dr. Ghali said he hoped the United States would "fulfill its role in the U.N. and maintain the hard-won prestige and leadership it has won there."

In a clear reference to doubts among the U.S. public over their country's role in U.N. peace enforcement operations in the wake of increasing bloodshed in Somalia, he added: "What is in question is perseverance, commitment and will."

He said 11 Russian soldiers guarding a bridge outside Senaki as part of a wider operation to secure the rail route from the Black Sea to the Georgian interior were shelled during the night but did not fight back.

"This morning they (the rebels) attacked with infantry," the source said. "The Russian soldiers returned fire and the attack was repulsed."

Russians came out of the barracks Thursday, after the Kremlin agreed to a request earlier this month from Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze, and deployed along the railway line in an operation with government forces.

The Russian brief is to defend the line but not to get involved in fighting, although they have permission to shoot to kill if attacked.

Georgian radio said rebels Friday night started shelling another town, Khobi, as well as Senaki using Grad multiple-launch missiles and other weapons. It said the rebel forces had been using residential areas as a shield.

'Most Russians oppose Yeltsin reelection'

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Sixty one per cent of Russians are opposed to President Boris Yeltsin being reelected to office but are unable to name a suitable successor, a poll published here Friday showed.

The survey by the U.S. News and World Report showed only 29 per cent of 1,000 respondents supported Mr. Yeltsin in presidential elections on June 12. But no other politician scored more than eight per cent, with former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, at less than one per cent, registering an even lower popularity rating than the late dictator Stalin.

Fifty per cent approved Mr. Yeltsin's running of the country, while 34 per cent were critical of his leadership, the survey found.

Questioned on the parliamentary elections scheduled for Dec. 12, 80 per cent said they intended to cast their

vote. Forty-three per cent said they would probably back pro-Yeltsin candidates and 19 per cent expressed support for the anti-Yeltsin camp.

The Russian leader said last week that deputies in the new assembly would decide whether the presidential election would go ahead.

Meanwhile, the Russian Communist Party (RCP) temporarily outlawed during the state of emergency declared between Oct. 3 and 18, submitted Friday a list of candidates for legislative elections to be held on Dec. 12.

"The party considers the holding of these elections to be invalid but will participate all the same," Valentin Kuptsov, a Communist Party leader, told AFP as he registered the list with the electoral commission.

Another former Communist institution, the newspaper Pravda, which was also banned

during the state of emergency, announced Friday that it would reappear as of next Tuesday.

Once the mouthpiece of Communist thought, the new Pravda will be "a newspaper of civilised opposition," according to its editor-in-chief, Viktor Limnik, who was elected to the post by the editorial staff.

President Yeltsin ordered Russian broadcast media Friday to offer equal access to the airwaves for all political blocs and parties vying for seats in the upcoming elections.

Mr. Yeltsin's order came after the Electoral Commission indicated Thursday that it was concerned about risks of sabotaged elections, because of the persistent influence of the Communist movement, according to ITAR-TASS.

The RCP electoral list is headed by the party's president, Gennady Zyuganov, and includes 182 names.

Fujimori appears to roll back on threat to quit

LIMA (R) — President Alberto Fujimori appeared to roll back on a threat to quit if Peru's voters reject a draft constitution, saying Friday his resignation was a "remote possibility" but that he could take "unexpected measures."

Mr. Fujimori, who has portrayed Peru's first-ever referendum on a constitution to be held Sunday as a plebiscite on his three-year rule, was asked about his statement that he would be forced to resign in the case of a 'no' vote.

"This is a remote possibility," he told reporters on a campaign swing in Lima shantytowns. "If I do not receive popular support, I would have to take some steps."

"Although I have not thought about it, I could take some unexpected measures," he said. "If I don't get the support for the reforms, it (the resignation) could happen."

In a television interview Thursday night, Mr. Fujimori said a "no" vote would create political instability in Peru and force him to resign.

Mr. Fujimori dissolved Congress in April 1992, seizing broad powers for himself.

Under international pressure, elections were held for a new Congress last November and the 80-member body drafted a new constitution.

Pollsters have predicted the constitution will be approved with a margin of at least 20 percentage points, although the Apoyo polling firm said the

"no" votes have increased over the last week.

Meanwhile, four jailed Shining Path leaders supported a call by their guerrilla chiefs for peace talks, the president's office said Friday night.

The letter urging militants to denounce "acts of desperation" that could scuttle an accord was revealed minutes before Lima and other coastal cities were plunged into an hour-long blackout.

Officials attributed the power outage to guerrilla attacks on electricity pylons.

During the blackout, Shining Path rebels exploded a bomb in the banking district in San Isidro, causing heavy damage to a state-owned bank but no injuries. A leaflet claiming responsibility for the attack was left at the site.

The letter provided by government palace said: "We support the letters of President Gonzalo and Comrade Miriam written to the president," a reference to rebel chief Abimael Guzman's non-de-guerre and his deputy Elena Iparraguirre.

Mr. Guzman and Ms. Iparraguirre have written two letters to Mr. Fujimori seeking peace talks in the last two months.

The guerrilla letter was revealed two days before Peruvians vote in the constitutional referendum that would open the way for President Fujimori's reelection.

Dr. Ghali also told his audience, including U.S. Vice President Al Gore, that he was "firmly committed to the concept of peace enforcement because it is firmly established in the (U.N.) charter."

He stressed the need to construct a "realistic basis for international relations," something which the United Nations offered a means of doing, although it did not hold all the answers to the problems posed by the increasing number of conflicts worldwide.

"I cannot answer the question of when to begin an enforcement operation... I can give my views on when an operation should stop," he added.

If the conflicts' protagonists showed no political will to end fighting then "peace cannot be enforced," he said.

U.N. operations could not succeed if troops provided would not "accept the discipline of a multinational operation" or if member states were "not ready to stay the course of peace enforcement," he added.

Boutros-Ghali stressed that multilateralism, which to some had become a "dirty word," was in his view "an indispensable asset."

He said the passage from one phase of history to another was never easy.

"The present moment is very demanding," he said.

There was no word from the press service on the Interfax report and no independent news on the fighting in the west of Georgia, a tiny republic on the southern rim of the former Soviet empire.

Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze flew to the region Friday saying rebel groups from Abkhazia, a Black Sea province, and Russia's northern Caucasus had joined Mr. Gamsakhurdia's men to forge a new alliance to counter a government offensive.

But both groups denied having joined Mr. Gamsakhurdia's camp.

EC leaders vow plenty but pledge little

BRUSSELS (R) — European Community (EC) leaders have declared the 12-nation bloc re-launched, but they have done little to solve the problem of unemployment and tackled most difficult issues for sake of appearances.

The heads of state and government announced after their special summit Friday that a new dawn was approaching for the bloc with the coming into force of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union on Nov. 1.

"We can claim we've done a good day's work for Europe," Belgian Prime Minister and current EC President Jean-Luc Dehaene said after the meeting.

This council has given a fresh impetus to Europe on the eve of the Maastricht Treaty coming into force. It has clearly shown the desire of all member states to relaunch Europe by implementing the treaty," he said.

But the EC leaders made scant reference to finely balanced-talks to open up world trade, made no progress on the divisive issue of the balance of power within the bloc as it expands to take in new members.

They did the bare minimum to begin boosting their economies and finding jobs for some of the 17 million unemployed,

simply broadening the scope of a special eight billion European Currency Unit (\$9.2 billion) loan scheme and offering soft loans for small firms.

But beyond that they contented themselves with deploping the high level of unemployment and insisting that the European Commission and finance ministers come up with concrete ideas by December.

The one issue on which they did finally make a decision — the sites of numerous new EC institutions — nearly caused their new-found unity to crack at the first test when Spain complained bitterly that it was not getting fair share.

The good schoolboys in the European class get punished and the difficult children get rewards," a diplomat quoted Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez as saying in an exchange with British Prime Minister John Major.

But fully aware that newspaper headlines would have trumpeted the summit's failure had it not agreed on the institutional share-out — a process one diplomat described as everyone taking a present home from a party — the EC leaders finally persuaded Spain to come into line.

The final share-out gives Frankfurt the embryo EC Central Bank, the European Monetary Institute, with Spain

winning the Trademark Office and the Agency for Health and Safety at Work.

The Environment Agency went to Denmark, Britain got the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products, the Netherlands got the new European police body Europol, Italy and Greece each got a training institute. Portugal got the European Drugs Observatory, Dublin got a veterinary inspection office, and Luxembourg got the commission's translation service.

But much as they swept the bloc's economic and employment crisis under the carpet until December, the EC leaders restricted themselves to words rather than deeds on the touchy issue of talks under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade despite having barely six weeks to resolve their differences.

They also steered well clear of the contentious subject of how the balance of power within the Community may be changed if Finland, Austria, Sweden and Norway join.

France in particular, worried that its influence in the bloc might be diluted as new members join wants to change the voting structure. But the smaller states and the applicants are strongly resisting any such change.

No funeral for tobacco heiress

NEW YORK (R) — The remains of tobacco heiress and philanthropist Doris Duke, who died at the age of 80, will be cremated and scattered at sea with no funeral service, her spokesman announced Friday.

In a statement, friend and adviser Bernard Lafferty said the request was made by Ms. Duke before her death in Beverly Hills, California. Ms. Duke led a glamorous but stormy life that included well-publicised love affairs, jet-setting trips around the world and frequent gifts to charity. Ms. Duke was dubbed "the richest girl in America," when in 1925 she inherited the 25 million fortune of her father J.B. "Buck" Duke, who had founded the American Tobacco Co., forerunner to the American Brands Conglomerate. That fortune is now worth an estimated \$750 million to \$1 billion. The statement said that people wishing to pay their respects should do so by making a contribution to the Doris Duke Foundation. Ms. Duke had recently made large donations to Duke University, founded by her father, for AIDS research, and also made a \$1 million contribution to the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation.

The oldest U.S. citizen turns 115

RADFORD, Virginia (AFP) — The oldest living American has turned 115. Margaret Skeete, who celebrated her 115th birthday Wednesday, says she does nothing to protect her health and is unimpressed by her impressive longevity. Asked her secret, daughter Verne Taylor answered for her mother, "Don't get any exercise. Don't drink any water. Don't eat any green vegetables. But eat plenty of sweets." "Make sure you leave me some cake," added Ms. Skeete, who was born in 1878 near Corpus Christi, Texas. Denise Jack, a spokeswoman for the Guinness Book of World Records, said Mrs. Skeete was the oldest living American. The oldest living person in the world is Jeanne Calment, 118, of France, she said.

U.K. government give pub-keepers their head

LONDON (AFP) — British pub-keepers are going to be able to put a head on their tap beer, following the government's withdrawal of a plan to force them to fill glasses with exactly one pint (0.569 litre) of beer, without "cheating" with a spot of foam. But the glasses will have to contain at least 95 per cent liquid, all the same. Consumer associations immediately denounced the decision, saying the government had caved in to pressure from brewers, which had campaigned strongly against the change. They said it would lead to an increase of six to seven pence per pint. "If customers are unhappy with the amount of liquid beer they have received, they are already able to ask for, and should get, a top-up" secretary of state for trade Patrick McLoughlin commented.

Indonesia cool on Dewi Sukarno nude picture

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia has reacted coolly to a plan by Dewi Sukarno, widow of the late President Sukarno, to publish a book of mostly nude photographs of herself, the official Antara News Agency reported. "It is a personal matter of the person concerned and there is no need to link it to her position as a former wife of the first Indonesian president," State Secretary Mardiono was quoted as saying by the agency Saturday. Mr. Mardiono said the issue was only a trivial matter to Indonesia. Local newspapers said the Japanese-born Dewi planned to publish in Tokyo a book entitled Syurga — Superior in Elegance — showing nude pictures of her. Sukarno married Dewi, a trained Geisha originally named Naoko Nemoto, in 1962 and changed her name to the one he gave her — Rania Sari Dewi Dewi, 53, was the youngest of Sukarno's six wives and one of two surviving widows. Dewi, who moved to Paris after Sukarno's death in 1970 and became an international socialite, told an Indonesian magazine last month she was considering becoming a Japanese citizen again because of what she described as shabby treatment by the Indonesian government. She said she was disappointed that the Indonesian government failed to pay her compensation.

Piccard breaks French giant slalom drought

SOELDEN, Austria (R) — Franck Piccard became the first Frenchman in 20 years to win an Alpine Ski World Cup giant slalom when he took first place in the opening race of the season Saturday.

Piccard, 29, almost gave up ski racing after a disappointing last season but decided to go on for his 10th season.

His time of one minute 56.32 seconds down the Rettenbach Glacier vindicated that decision.

Sweden's Fredrik Nyberg, who last won a giant slalom in Mount Hutt in 1970, finished second in 1:56.44, ahead of world champion Kjetil Andre Aamodt of Norway who clocked 1:56.56 on the powder snow which became slower as the race went on.

But there was disappointment for Olympic champion Alberto Tomba who had only just recovered from a knee injury. Lying third after the first leg, the Italian caught a gate pole with his left ski on the second leg and fell.

Reigning overall World Cup champion Marc Girardelli of Luxembourg, taking part in his 331st cup event, finished fourth in 1:56.58 after skiing the second-fastest first leg through the 43 gates.

Piccard, who had never done better than fourth in a World Cup giant slalom before, became the first Frenchman to win in the discipline since Henri Duvillard in 1973.

The 1988 Olympic super-giant slalom achieved a similar feat three years ago when he broke a French downhill drought which had lasted for 20 years since a victory by

Duvillard.

Franco's women have had more success than the men in giant slalom in recent years and Carole Merle is the current world champion.

"This win is a sort of new burst for me. Last season was so disappointing, so frustrating," Piccard said.

Nyberg, who was seventh after the first leg, had the fastest second leg with 56.64 seconds, five-hundredths quicker than Piccard, and said he had been more relaxed on the second run, which also had 43 gates.

"I had a great second run and I proved I'm in good shape," said Nyberg whose best giant slalom results last season were two third places, in Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, and Oppdal, Norway.

Aamodt had said before the race that he was not feeling in top form and he was more than pleased with his third place.

"My timing was still off in the first run but I was more aggressive in the second," he said.

Girardelli, who started training for the season later than usual after an injury, said he had hoped to hold on to his second place after the first leg.

"I lost time in the bottom part of both runs," said Girardelli, who clocked the fastest intermediate times in both legs.

"But I'm usually a slow starter in the season and I don't remember ever having got off to such a good start as now," Girardelli said.



Middle East rookie Richie Holford of Ireland with his Ford Escort takes second place in the Oman International Rally

UAE's Saleh wins Oman Rally

MUSCAT (AP) — Michel Saleh of the United Arab Emirates cruised to victory Friday in the 676-kilometre (422.5-mile) Oman International Rally, leaving the Middle East Championship poised for an exciting final round in Dubai in December.

Saleh, who led the two-day rally overnight by almost eight minutes, eased to victory here in his Toyota Celica with a more than 11-minute margin over Middle East rookie Richie Holford of Ireland in a Ford Escort.

"It was easy for me. I made some mistakes because I was going slowly (to make sure of victory) but there was no problem," said the Lebanese-born

Saleh who now holds second place in the six-round Middle East Championship.

"There will be more competition in Dubai and more drivers but I am confident about taking the championship."

With pre-rally favourite Nasser Khalifa Al Attiyah of Qatar sensationally going out of the event with transmission problems on Thursday's first stage, Qatar's Sheikh Hamad Al Thani, who finished seventh overall here in a Mitsubishi Galant, is now the championship leader from favourite Saleh.

Abdullah Bakhshab, who took third place here in a Toyota Celica, said he had been inspired by the Saudi

Arabian soccer team's qualification for the World Cup finals following its 4-3 victory over Iran in Doha Thursday.

"I am very proud. I was almost in tears at the end of the match," said the Jeddah driver, who watched the game on television here.

Of the 27 crews who started the high-speed rally Thursday, only 11 finished as the Oman International's rugged 22-stage route through valleys, hills and plains took its toll on the cars.

Oman's national champion Abdul Rahman Al Kamali, third overnight, went out of the rally Friday when his Toyota Celica's steering arm broke.

Australians plan to shut down Maradona

SYDNEY (AP) — A revamped Argentine team headed by Diego Maradona will attempt to restore lost pride when it faces Australia in a World Cup qualifying soccer match Sunday night at the Sydney Football Stadium.

But Australian coach Eddie Thomson said Saturday that he had devised a tactical plan aimed at stopping veteran Maradona from dictating the flow of the game.

Australia and Argentina will meet Sunday and on Nov. 17 in Buenos Aires with the winner on aggregate advancing to the 1994 finals in the United States.

"All we can do to stop Maradona is to try and stop the supply of ball to him," Thomson said. "If we pay him too much attention then (striker) Gabriel Batistuta or Abel Balbo could run riot."

"Defensively we are good and I reckon we've got the right balance."

Two-time champion Argentina was forced into the playoff against the unheralded Australians after suffering a humiliating 5-0 defeat at home to Colombia last month.

Argentina won the cup in 1986 and was runner-up in 1990, while Australia only has qualified once — back in 1974.

Argentine coach Alfio Basile will field a new-look team against the underdog Australians with 33-year-old Maradona leading the way from midfield.

Maradona, who was banned

from international soccer for 15 months after failing a drug test in 1991, has looked positive in training despite heaving lifting only two games since being sacked by Spanish club Seville in June.

The Argentines will be without defender Oscar Ruggeri and midfielder Diego Simeone, who are suspended, and the starting lineup is expected to show six changes from the team beaten by Colombia.

Australia, led by a number of European-based professionals, is quietly confident of causing an upset and annoyed by what the players perceive as a lack of respect from their Argentine rivals.

"It's all nonsense, them saying that they respect us," said fullback Jason VAA Blek. "I have a feeling they think they can treat us with contempt. If they do, they are in for a big surprise."

"Physically and mentally we are ready for them. We will grasp the initiative early and play the game our way."

Goalkeeper Mark Bosnich, who plays for Aston Villa in England and has had only 48 hours to adjust to Australian conditions, performed impressively in a training session Saturday morning.

"Mark has exceptional organisation skills and agility," said Thomson. "He's so motivated."

Thomson will not reveal until shortly before kickoff which one of his players will mark

Maradona.

He also has to decide between defensive midfielder Paul Wade and English-based striker David Mitchell in his starting lineup.

"We have to attack as we did against Canada and put Argentina on the back foot," said attacking midfielder Amelio Vidmar. "If we can score, I think they'll drop their heads."

"If we sit back and let them take control they can hold the ball for three weeks. We have to go at them and get a result to take to South America."

Midfielder Robbie Slater, who plays for French club RC Lens, said the Australians have great faith in their own ability.

"Gone are the days when people only talked about the guts and determination of Australian teams," he said. "We can knock the ball around, too. And we'll make it hard for them."

Thomson will use a defence comprising Bosnich, Tony Vidmar, Van Blek, Milan Ivanovic, Alex Tobin and Mehmet Durakovic.

The midfield is expected to be Slater, Ned Zelic and Aurelio Vidmar, with Wade or Mitchell filling the other spot alongside striker Graham Arnold.

Basile had called up Sergio Vazquez and uncapped duo Carlos MacCallister and Jose Chamot to Defence, while Maradona, midfielder Hugo Perez and striker Balbo also have been recalled in his provisional team.

Win keeps Timman's chess title hopes alive

JAKARTA (Agencies) — Jan Timman of the Netherlands scored a dramatic and unexpected victory over Russia's Anatoly Karpov in the 20th game of the World Chess Championship Saturday to keep his slim hopes for the world title alive.

Timman's victory was greeted by wild applause from the large crowd in Jakarta who had expected to see the match end Saturday.

"It was a good game — but not by him," an overjoyed Timman said as he left the playing hall surrounded by back-slapping spectators.

Karpov needed only to draw with Timman to take the world title but the desperate Dutchman played his best game of the match to destroy Karpov's defences and keep the match alive.

Karpov still leads the match 12 points to 8, leaving Timman needing four more victories to tie the match which began in the Netherlands almost eight weeks ago and moved to Indonesia for the second half.

A large group of Russian tourists who had flown in to Jakarta from Moscow to watch their compatriot take the world title left the game stunned while Dutch supporters were jubilant.

"I enjoyed myself immensely today," said Dutch journalist Yvette Nagel. "Unfortunately I don't believe that Timman can win the next four games."

"It was not a fun game," a depressed Karpov aide Ron Henley admitted. "Jan played virtually flawlessly."

Despite playing with the disadvantage of the black pieces, Timman decided to force Karpov to earn his final half point rather than concede the match with a Short draw as many had expected.

Karpov, having arrived six minutes late, began the game with a conservative English opening, but nervous play soon gave Timman the initiative.

The Dutchman exchanged into an endgame with rooks and queens in which Karpov's king was exposed and pushed home his advantage with ruthless efficiency.

Karpov finally extended his hand to Timman in resignation after 40 moves and five hours of play.

The match between Karpov, ranked second in the world, and Timman, ranked only 31st, has been beset by difficulties over prize money and often overshadowed by a rival, unofficial contest in London.

Karpov and Timman are playing for the official world championship because Karpov, the current world number one, and England's Nigel Short, ranked 9th, broke away from the World Chess Federation to organise a more lucrative contest which concluded in Karpov's favour last week.

Karpov was stripped of his world title by the World Chess Federation in April but still claims to be the true world champion.

The next game will be played with Monday Timman having the advantage of the white pieces.

Meanwhile, Karpov and Short won the first battle in the world chess war with a heavily hyped \$2 million breakaway championship which showed that a game for eggheads can work on television.

But the World Chess Federation, FIDE, which has staged every championship since 1948, isn't surrendering — even though it was forced to cut the prize money and scramble for a new venue during its rival title match between Karpov and Timman.

For the first time in history, the chess world is deeply divided and there will be two world champions.

Karpov, the highest-rated player in chess history, won the first Professional Chess Association crown and about \$956,250 (\$1.43 million) on Oct. 21. Karpov, who lost to Short in a qualifying match, is expected to clinch the FIDE title and \$440,000 if he beats Timman.

While boxing fans accept several rival titleholders, many top chess players are upset about the split and would like to see a reconciliation.

"It's been a clash of personalities and money has played a big role," said Nathan Divins.

ly, president of the Commonwealth Chess Association and Canada's zonal FIDE president.

Last February, Karpov and Short refused to play their title match for FIDE, denouncing the federation as corrupt, bureaucratic and inept. Much of their venom was reserved for FIDE's president, Florencio Campomanes.

To stage their match, they set up the Professional Chess Association (PCA) with the aim of making the top rung of competitive chess as lucrative as professional golf or tennis.

The Times newspaper, which put up most of the £1.7 million (\$2.55 million) prize money, insists its sponsorship paid off.

"This has been the most talked about event with which the Times has been associated since the first assault on Mount Everest" in 1953, said editor Peter Stothard.

New World attorney Boh Rice, the PCA's first commissioner, said the Karpov-Short match had taken some "historic strides" toward commercialising chess.

"Most important, by far, we proved that chess does work on TV, does attract a highly desirable audience, and does hold that audience," he said. "We can prove now beyond a shadow of a doubt the commercial value of chess."

Britain broadcast 60 hours of chess, and millions of viewers tuned in coverage of the match in the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia and Africa.

The PCA has a busy schedule of events planned for the next year.

Rice said 46 of the world's 52 top players had accepted invitations to compete in a PCA qualifying match in Groningen, Netherlands, in December, with a prize fund of \$200,000.

The association plans to sponsor five speed-chess events in 1994 in New York, London, Paris, Moscow and either Barcelona, Venice or Milan, each with \$200,000 in prize money, he said. Two further qualifying rounds will also be held next year, "and there's a good chance one will be in Munich," he said.

AMMAN LITTLE LEAGUE

Following are the results of games played Friday, Oct. 29 and the standings of the teams up to that date.

SENIORS					
Fordboro	2	VS	Champions	2	
Austrian	2	VS	Amer. Kitch	0	
MIDS					
Intervec	2	VS	Al Hikma	1	
Pengot	4	VS	ASC	1	
JUNIORS II					
Milano	1	VS	Nash/Ebb	1	
Junghans	6	VS	Pepsi	0	
JUNIOR I					
La Ciozna	2	VS	Modern Schools	0	
Al Zay	0	VS	UPS	0	

STANDINGS

SENIORS					
Austrian Airlines	14				
American Kitchens	11				
Fordboro	8				
Champions	5				
MIDS					
Intervec	21				
Pengot	10				
Al Hikma	7				
ASC	2				
JUNIOR II					
Milano	14				
Junghans	14				
Nash/Ebb/Ebbini	8				
Pepsi	3				
JUNIORS I					
La Ciozna	14				
Modern Schools	8				
UPS	7				
EL ZAY	7				

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
AND TAMARA HUSSEIN
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TAKE EVERY TRICK

East-West vulnerable. East deals.					
NORTH					
♠ 9 7 4 2					
♥ 4 3					
♦ A 7 6					
♣ 5 4 3					
WEST					
♠ 6					
♥ K J 8 6 5					
♦ K 5					
♣ 10 9 7 2					
SOUTH					
♠ Q 5					
♥ A 10					
♦ Q J 10 8 4 2					
♣ A 3					

The bidding:
East: 1♠, 2♦, 3♥, 4♥, 5♥, 6♥, 7♥, 8♥, 9♥, 10♥, 11♥, 12♥, 13♥, 14♥, 15♥, 16♥, 17♥, 18♥, 19♥, 20♥, 21♥, 22♥, 23♥, 24♥, 25♥, 26♥, 27♥, 28♥, 29♥, 30♥, 31♥, 32♥, 33♥, 34♥, 35♥, 36♥, 37♥, 38♥, 39♥, 40♥, 41♥, 42♥, 43♥, 44♥, 45♥, 46♥, 47♥, 48♥, 49♥, 50♥, 51♥, 52♥, 53♥, 54♥, 55♥, 56♥, 57♥, 58♥, 59♥, 60♥, 61♥, 62♥, 63♥, 64♥, 65♥, 66♥, 67♥, 68♥, 69♥, 70♥, 71♥, 72♥, 73♥, 74♥, 75♥, 76♥, 77♥, 78♥, 79♥, 80♥, 81♥, 82♥, 83♥, 84♥, 85♥, 86♥, 87♥, 88♥, 89♥, 90♥, 91♥, 92♥, 93♥, 94♥, 95♥, 96♥, 97♥, 98♥, 99♥, 100♥.

Ivanisevic downs Washington in Stockholm

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP) — Goran Ivanisevic, playing near flawless tennis, breezed into the final of the \$1.65 million Stockholm open for the second straight year Saturday with a 6-2, 6-1 win over Mahai Washington.

Ivanisevic, the defending champion, was never challenged by the onseeded Washington in a match that

lasted just one hour and seven minutes.

The tall, hard-serving Croatian did everything right. As usual, he served well, hitting 10 aces for a total of 55 in four matches here. His returns were also sharp and his back court game sparkling.

"I played really great," Ivanisevic said. "I haven't hit so many down-the-line winners in

my life."

"Everything worked today. Not only the serve. I just hit the ball very hard and everything went in."

Ivanisevic, seeded No. 8, broke Washington in the opening game on the fast green set carpet to set the tone of the match. Washington was also broken at the start of the second set.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Sudan accuses U.S. of interference

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Foreign Minister Suleiman Abu Salih on Saturday accused the United States of interference in Sudanese domestic affairs by sponsoring the right of self-determination for southern Sudan. Abu Salih, who was abroad during a recent official campaign against the United States, was quoted Saturday by the official Sudan News Agency (SUNA) as saying a seminar held recently in Washington entitled "Sudan, the forgotten tragedy" amounted to "open interference" in Sudan's affairs by the U.S. government. He charged that Washington used the seminar to pressure the factions of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to agree on demanding self-determination for southern Sudan. Mr. Abu Salih said he believed that self-determination implied separation of southern Sudan and ultimate disintegration of the country.

British supporter visits exiles

MARJ AL ZOUBOUR, — The chairman of a British support group for the Palestinian exiles in South Lebanon visited their camp Saturday. The 215 exiles are to be repatriated by Dec. 17, one year after Israel expelled 415 Palestinians from the occupied territories to South Lebanon. The others have already returned in stages. But Stuart Bruce, a public relations consultant who heads a Committee for the Palestinian Deportees based in the northern English city of Leeds, said their return was not guaranteed. "There is a slim possibility that their return could be delayed. Israel could change its mind," he said in the Marj Al Zoubour camp.

U.N. experts leave Iraq, find no items

BAGHDAD (R) — Weapons inspectors left Iraq on Saturday, saying the longest and biggest U.N. hunt for banned armaments had not turned up anything on the prohibited list. The 50 experts have been scanning the country for a month, using advanced helicopters and high-tech sensors trying to detect possible storage facilities for banned armament. "The findings are that we have not found any prohibited items," team leader Nikita Smidovich told reporters. "This will be reported to the executive chairman and through him to the Security Council," he added before departure.

Palestinian teachers may regain jobs

KUWAIT (R) — Four hundred Palestinian residents of Kuwait have won preliminary approval for their applications to regain teaching jobs they lost after the 1990-91 Gulf crisis, a teacher's union leader said in remarks published Saturday. Ahmad Al Houli, chairman of the Kuwait Teachers' Society, was quoted by the English-language Arab Times as saying Education Minister Ahmad Al Rubai had given approval in principle to the job applications. He said Mr. Rubai had indicated final approval was conditional on the applicants' residency permits being in order. "A statement containing the names of these teachers was submitted to the minister during the society's recent board meeting," Mr. Houli was quoted as saying. In their applications the teachers had confirmed their loyalty to Kuwait during the Iraqi occupation and had confirmed that they had extended "the necessary help" to Kuwaitis in that period, Mr. Houli was quoted as saying.

Kuwait tanker firm sees \$200m fraud

KUWAIT (R) — Losses from fraud at the state-owned Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) may amount to \$200 million, a newspaper reported on Saturday. "Documented embezzled sums are estimated at \$90 million, (but) I think the number will reach \$200 million when investigations are concluded," Al Qabas newspaper quoted KOTC Chairman and Managing Director Abdullah Al Roumi as saying. "Most of the suspects were abroad or escaped just hours before the issue was turned to the public prosecution (in December 1992)." Al Qabas quoted Mr. Roumi as saying. Oil Minister Ad Al Baghli last December said investigations into the KOTC revealed losses running into millions of dollars.

Iran arrests 190 for 'social corruption'

TEHRAN (AFP) — The Iranian police have arrested 190 people this month on charges of selling alcoholic drinks and renting out "decadent" video cassettes. Kayhan newspaper said Saturday. More than 60,000 litres of alcohol, some 4,500 videos and 1,000 pictures have also been seized as part of a crackdown on "social corruption" in Iran, it said. It was not clear whether the confiscated videos and pictures were hard core pornography or more mainstream productions deemed indecent in the Islamic republic.

Kabul condemns U.N. apathy

KABUL (AFP) — Afghan Foreign Minister Hidayat Amin Arsaal on Saturday condemned the United Nations and Western countries for their apathy towards financing his country's reconstruction. "The U.N. is using the security situation in Afghanistan as a pretext in order not to send the necessary assistance," said Mr. Arsaal, who returned to Kabul on Friday after a month-long official visit to the United States where he addressed the U.N. General Assembly in New York. The foreign minister's comments followed a recent announcement by the world body of reconstruction assistance for the country worth \$600 million. "Without economic revival and a start in reconstruction, we will not be able to achieve full security," he insisted, adding that the U.N. assistance should be regarded as part of a larger strategy for aid to Afghanistan.

Kuwaiti court delays Bush plot verdict

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A Kuwaiti court decided on Saturday to postpone until Dec. 25 its verdict in an alleged Iraqi-backed plot to assassinate former U.S. President George Bush to guarantee a fair trial.

Judge Salah Al Fahd, chairman of the State Security Court, announced the decision at the end of a 15-minute session in which the verdict had been expected against the 11 Iraqi and three Kuwaiti suspects.

"This is an important trial, and to guarantee a fair trial and that the accused are treated fairly, it has been decided to postpone the verdict until Dec. 25," he said.

Amid tight security, the 14 defendants were in court in the metal cage used since the trial opened on June 5.

Mr. Fahd said more time was needed to examine the 1,700 pages making up the Bush case. "We don't want to condemn innocent people. On the contrary, we're trying to find the least proof of their innocence," he said.

"The accused are in good hands, despite their nationality, and no external factor will be able to influence the trial," pledged the judge, in answer to criticism of the trial.

But defence lawyers warned Friday that the court was likely to pass stiff verdicts, with at least four of the Iraqis facing death sentences.

The suspects are accused of planning to carry out a car-bomb attack on Mr. Bush, at the orders of the Iraqi intelligence service, on April 14 during his visit to the emirate.

Baghdad has denied any involvement in the attack, which the Kuwaiti authorities said they foiled by unearthing the bomb and rounding up the suspects.

Two Iraqis, Raad Abdul Amir Al Assadi and Wali Abdul Hadi Al Ghazali, have acknowledged links with Iraqi intelligence, while another two, Salem and Bandar Al Shemari, confessed to transporting explosives, lawyers said.

In June, three months after the trial opened, Prosecutor General Badr Messad demanded the death sentence for all 11 Iraqis and one of the Kuwaitis. He sought 10-year prison terms against the other two.

The proof of Iraq's key role was irrefutable, following investigation of the car-bomb to be used in the assassination, he argued.

Most of the accused in the Bush plot have denied any involvement or links with Iraq. Three defendants protested that their confessions were extracted by police beatings.

Amnesty International has criticised the trial as unfair and charged the security court did not meet international standards.

A U.S. Cruise missile attack on Baghdad, in retaliation for the alleged assassination plot, also jeopardised the chances of a fair trial, Amnesty argued.

Six people were killed in the June 27 attack on the Iraqi intelligence headquarters, according to Baghdad.



JORDAN RIVER DESIGNS: Her Majesty Queen Noor Saturday tours the annual Save the Children fair exhibition after opening it. The exhibition displays products from the Beni Hamida weaving project and the Jordan River Designs. This year's Beni Hamida collection of

Oakley to give new impetus to Somali reconciliation efforts

Combined agency dispatches

MOGADISHU — U.S. envoy Robert Oakley headed to Somalia to try to break a stalemate in the peace process, and an uneasy calm returned to the capital Mogadishu Saturday, a day after clan militia fought each other across the city.

Mr. Oakley was returning to Somalia to try to ensure that a ceasefire holds in Mogadishu and to give new impetus to efforts at political reconciliation, U.S. officials said.

Mr. Oakley is due to arrive in Mogadishu on Monday and expects to be in the region for a week.

Mr. Oakley has no plans to meet General Mohammad Farah Aideded — a major warlord Washington at one time blamed for most of the violence in Mogadishu — but will have contact with members of his clan.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Gbali wants to arrange a Somali peace conference that excludes General Aideded, blamed by the United Nations for the killing

of 24 Pakistani peacekeepers on June 5, officials said.

But a group of African leaders working closely with the U.S. and led by Ethiopia's leader Meles Zenawi insist such a conference should be attended by all factions including Gen. Aideded.

"That's the only way out and we hope Ambassador Oakley will help bridge the gap between our views and those of the U.N.," an African diplomat said.

In Mogadishu on Saturday an uneasy calm prevailed, a day after clan fighting outside the Safahi Hotel, where foreign reporters stay, in which the U.N. said five Somalis and an Italian civilian were wounded.

"Apart from some small arms fire last night there were no reports of any major incidents in the city," U.N. spokesman Captain Tim McDavit told reporters.

Friday's fighting brought to 55 the number of Somalis wounded in inter-clan fighting this week. Up to 50 were wounded on Monday and Tuesday during heavy clashes

between supporters of Gen. Aideded and rival warlord Ali Mahdi Mohammad.

Dr. Gbali said in an interview published in Saturday's Washington Post that the U.N. mission to Somalia is doomed to failure if U.S. forces pull out before a peace plan has been implemented.

He said that if the United States and other countries halted their efforts to disarm the warring plans, the warlords would realise that the world was not determined for peace to be restored.

"They will fight each other again," he declared.

U.S. President Bill Clinton announced earlier this month that U.S. forces would be repatriated by March 31 next year at the latest.

In a speech on Friday to the U.N. Association of the United States (UNA-USA) he warned that U.N. operations could not succeed if member states were "not ready to stay the course of peace enforcement."

Dr. Gbali defended his decision to visit Somalia last week, against the advice of Washington.

8 sentenced to death in Egypt

HAEKSTAF (Agencies) — A military court sentenced eight Muslim extremists including an army conscript to death Saturday for attempting to overthrow the government and attacking soldiers to steal their weapons.

The death verdicts bring to 39 the number sentenced to hang by military courts since President Hosni Mubarak began referring cases of accused Muslim radicals to the tribunals last December.

Defendants' families screamed and cried as the verdicts were announced, shouting abuse at the judges and accusing them of being unfair. Police, guarding the courtroom in force at a military camp in a desert area, intervened and removed all family members from the court.

The 54 defendants involved in Saturday's trial, including seven at large, were accused of belonging to the Vanguard of Conquest, which the government says is a revival of the Jihad group that assassinated President Anwar Sadat in 1981. Two who received death

sentences are fugitives.

Another man charged in the case, Nazih Noshi Rashid, was injured in an August bomb attempt on the life of Interior Minister Hassan Al Aili. Five people died in the bombing and Rashid succumbed to his injuries the next day.

Early this year the government announced the arrests of hundreds of alleged members of the same banned extremist group. Due to the large number of defendants, they were divided into four groups on the basis of specific charges.

Two defendants, Khawled Mohammad Barakat and Fathi Ahmad Hazim, wore red war-movie suits to the trial, a sign they expected death sentences. People sentenced to death in Egypt usually are assigned red clothing.

Both men received what they expected.

The army conscript, Abdulah Mohammad, was among six defendants convicted of killing a truck driver and his assistant to steal their vehicle. Another six were found to have attacked a guard at the

Saudi Arabian embassy and two others elsewhere in Cairo and stole their weapons.

The defendants, meanwhile, shouted slogans insisting that the holy struggle to turn Egypt into an Islamic state continues.

"Islamic, Islamic, Egypt will soon be Islamic," they chanted. "The more you kill us, the more we will seek martyrdom."

A handwritten statement that a defendant banded to the Associated Press from behind the bars of the courtroom defendants' cage, purporting to express the feelings of all of them, said death does not frighten those in the Islamic movement.

"Death sentences are nothing but a force that pushes us forward," it said. "The movement that requires death gains life and will not let the blood of martyrs go without revenge."

In addition to the eight men sentenced to hang, the court-martial gave six defendants life sentences, which means 25 years in Egypt. Twenty-five were sent to prison for terms of three to 20 years.

U.N. warns of tougher Haiti sanctions

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The U.N. Security Council warned Saturday that it could take tougher sanctions against Haiti if a plan to restore democracy continues to be blocked.

The warning came the day exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was to have been reinstated under a U.N.-brokered peace plan between Mr. Aristide and the Haitian military which ousted him in September 1991.

At present the U.N. has imposed an arms and oil embargo on the impoverished country.

Earlier this week Mr. Aristide called for a total embargo. The Security Council blamed the Haitian military leaders for the current impasse on returning the country to democracy.

"General (Raoul) Cedras and the military authorities have not so far fulfilled their obligations," said the council.

The council supported the call from special U.N. envoy Dante Caputo for the military and Aristide-appointed Prime Minister Robert Malval to meet next week to try and solve the problem.

However, neither side has agreed yet to the meeting. Mr. Caputo stressed that where would be no negotiating the so-called Governors Island agreement and that the talks would be aimed at resolving disputes which have blocked its application.

The council said the military and its supporters "entered and perpetuated in Haiti a political and security environment" that prevented Mr. Aristide's return.

Mr. Aristide compounded his problems, however, by advocating a seat for Taiwan in the United Nations when he addressed the general assembly Thursday.

As a result China blocked the council's issuing of the statement late Friday, demanding an explanation from Mr. Aristide.

In a compromise, Haiti's U.N. delegation drew up a diplomatic note to be issued to all U.N. members that will confirm China's status at the United Nations. Taiwan was ousted from the United Nations in 1971 when the assembly voted to give China's seat to Beijing.

Mr. Aristide, in a major speech to the U.N. General Assembly Thursday, prominently mentioned Taiwan and no one is certain what prompted him to do so.

As he began his address he said, "I cannot overlook all the other friends who are so dear to our hearts, those in the Caribbean, in America, in Europe and Asia who have given us such a warm-hearted welcome."

"We are thinking particularly of the republic of China, Taiwan, which, it is our hope, will regain its place in the great family of the United Nations."

Taiwan recently has been wooing Central American and Caribbean states. A number of them earlier this month asked the assembly to consider giving Taiwan separate U.N. membership. But China strongly objected to the move and the item failed even to get onto the assembly's agenda.

In a Haiti related action, France has drawn up a resolution imposing a total trade embargo on Haiti to supplement the oil and arms sanctions now in place.

COLUMN

Madrid suburb makes bid for Lenin's corpse

MADRID (AP) — Lenin may be unwelcome in Moscow these days, but residents of a working-class Madrid neighbourhood say they'd be glad to have his embalmed cadaver as a tourist attraction. Representatives of the neighbourhood association of Parla, a bleak bedroom community on Madrid's southern outskirts, met with Russian diplomats this week, who promised that if the body of the father of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution left Russia, Parla "would be the first to know," association spokesman Florencio Aguado said Friday. "The idea came up when the Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin said they were going to remove the mausoleum and corpse from Red Square," Mr. Aguado told Spanish National Radio (RNE). "It seems like a good idea to bring it to Parla to draw tourists." The association says that if Lenin's cadaver makes it to Parla, the city would set up a mausoleum and charge admission. The plan, however, has not met with a warm reception from city hall, which is controlled by the conservative Popular Party, and some city officials have referred to Mr. Aguado as a neophyte, RNE said. The insults appear to have left Mr. Aguado combative, if not discouraged. "It's not that they're jealous," he said. "It's just that they're short in stature and imagination." Russian government officials, including the mayor of Moscow, have proposed moving Lenin's body out of Red Square, most likely to a plot next to his mother's grave in St. Petersburg.

Researchers unlock 2 AIDS secrets

PARIS (AFP) — French researchers this week announced two breakthroughs they hope will lead to development of an anti-AIDS vaccine, unveiling how the virus enters the human organism. In Paris Monday, Pasteur Institute virologist Ara Hovanessian told how he and his team of researchers had managed to identify a new cell receptor constituting the "front door" through which the HIV (human immune deficiency virus) enters the organism. And in Marseille the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) announced its scientists had discovered a molecular structure capable of blocking the AIDS virus from the cells it normally infects. Dr. Hovanessian said that up till now virologists thought there was a single receptor on a cell, known as CD4. "In fact there are two, the CD4, but also the CD26." He said the CD26 recognised "keys" on one of the most important parts of the virus and these "keys" were identical for all versions of the HIV virus. "It would suffice to change the locks to stop the virus getting into the cell," Dr. Hovanessian said. These advances should in the long term permit researchers to develop drugs or a vaccine capable of preventing the virus from entering and thus halting HIV infection, he said. Dr. Hovanessian said the virus was like a ship's cargo seeking dock. It needed first a mooring point — the CD4 receptor — and then a crane CD26 — to unload the virus cargo.

U.K. MPs approve ordination of women

LONDON (AP) — The House of Commons approved the Church of England's plan to ordain women priests. "We shall live to see the day when a woman Archbishop of Canterbury greets a pope in a church that has ordained women," Labour Party lawmaker Tony Benn told lawmakers who voted 215 to 121 in favour of the plan. If the House of Lords, parliament's unelected chamber, votes Tuesday to approve the plan and Queen Elizabeth II agrees, 1,350 women deacons will become eligible for ordination probably in 1994. Friday's debate included impassioned pleas by opponents who reject the ordination of women. Department of Environment Secretary John Gummer warned the change would prove to be the first of many for the church, which had sold out to "access religion." "This won't be the only step along this road. There are a whole series of other measures that come behind this," Mr. Gummer said.

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